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Buonaparte

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MEMOIRS

OF

NAPOLEON,

HIS COURT AND FAMILY.

BY

THE DUCHESS D'ABRANTES,
(MADAME JUNOT.)

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MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON,

His Court, and Family.

INTRODUCTION.

Every body nowadays publishes Memoirs; every one has recollections which they think worthy of recording. Following the example of many others, I might long ago have taken a retrospective view of the past; I might have revealed a number of curious and unknown facts respecting a period which has riveted the interest of the world; but the truth is, I was not, until recently, infected with the mania, which is so universal, of memoir writing. I felt a certain degree of vexation, whenever I observed an announcement of new memoirs.

I entered into life at a period fertile in remarkable events, and I lived in habits of daily intimacy with the actors of the great political drama which has engrossed the attention of Europe for thirty-five years. It will therefore be difficult for me to refrain from speaking of individuals, when events bring them forward on the scene. This will be disagreeable, but I cannot help it.

I have witnessed, and have even been engaged in, many of the agitated scenes which occurred during an epoch of wonder and horror; and though I was at the time very young, every incident remains indelibly engraven on my memory. The importance of events on which the fate of a great nation depended could not fail to influence the bent of my mind. This influence, I imagine, must have been felt by all women who have been my contemporaries. With regard to myself, at least, I can confidently affirm that I retain no recollection of the joys of early childhood; of the light-heartedness which, at that period of life, annihilated sorrow, and leaves behind an imperishable

impression. No sooner did my understanding begin to develop itself, than I was required to employ it in guarding all my words and gestures: for, at the period to which I allude, the veriest trifle might become the subject of serious investigation. Even the sports and games of childhood were rigorously watched, and I shall never forget that a domiciliary visit was made to our house at Toulouse, and my father was on the point of being arrested, because, while playing at the game called *La Tour, prends garde!* I said to a little boy of five years old, "You shall be *Monsieur le Dauphin.*" Continual danger imposed on every individual the obligation of not only guarding his own conduct, but observing that of others. Nothing, however trifling, was a matter of indifference to the heads of families, and those who surrounded them; and the child of ten years old became an observer. It was in the midst of these torments that the first years of my youth were passed: later, education resumed its course, and a mother of a family ceased to tremble for the fate of a father and a husband. At the period to which I refer, the misfortunes of France were at their height. The impressions which I then imbibed are perhaps the strongest I ever experienced. Hitherto my eye and my ear had been attentive; I observed and listened with avidity. The nature of my education no doubt contributed to strengthen my mind. My studies were not of a superficial kind, but were those usually allotted to young men. My father, who loved me tenderly, had me educated in his own house, and under his own superintendence.

It has frequently been said that the revolution had a fatal influence on education. This is untrue. One branch of education, viz., *good manners*, certainly experienced a check from which it will not easily recover. This is unfortunate. The want of that courtesy and urbanity which conferred on France the reputation of the politest of nations, is perhaps an obstacle to those intimate relations which unite together the different parts of society. I therefore regard the loss of that politeness which once distinguished us, as a matter of more importance than it is sometimes considered; vulgarity and impertinence have replaced it, without even frankness and generosity to render them pardonable. On the other hand, education has gained materially by the total change it has undergone. No doubt the revolutionary turmoil of 1793 and 1794 threw impediments in the way of private education. On the important subject of religious instruction, for example, great difficulties were experienced; every one educated in the schools suffered in this respect; but parents themselves—I speak here of the general mass—instilled the first principles of religion into the minds of their children.

As to young men, if they were for a time deprived of the advantages of universities and public schools, it is certain that a career was opened to them much more fertile in its results, than was the old fashioned routine of instruction pursued by the minim monks in their colleges. In those days of trouble and disaster, the rising generation, who were frequently obliged to brave death, proscription, and misery, and on whose prudence frequently depended the lives of all who were dear to them, received instructive lessons from the appalling events which passed before their eyes. Women, too, acquired a degree of prudence and a spirit of observation which were highly useful to them in every relation of life; and they learned the value of that real talent and solid information which could be turned to useful account in earning a livelihood. Young men imbibed a hatred of oppression, a love of glory, and a contempt of death, which rendered them invincible: they acquired a knowledge of their own rights and of those of their country. With these men Bonaparte conquered Italy; with these men he marched to regenerate ancient Egypt. One of them commanded and fell at Novi when he had scarcely completed his thirtieth year, while in Paris a young man of the same age was thought worthy to preside in the Convention.

About this period the private interests of my family became, as it were, linked with the public interests. Between my mother and the Bonaparte family the closest friendship subsisted. He who afterwards became the master of the world, lived long on a footing of intimacy with us. He used to frequent my father's house when I was yet a child, and he scarcely a young man. I may almost say that I have witnessed every scene of his life; for being married to one of those men who were devotedly attached to him, and constantly with him, what I did not myself see I was accurately informed of. I may therefore fearlessly affirm, that of all the individuals who have written about Napoleon, few are so competent as myself to give a detailed account of him. My mother, who was the friend of Lætitia Bonaparte, knew him from his earliest youth. She rocked him in his cradle, and, when he quitted Brienne and came to Paris, she guided and protected his younger days. Not only Napoleon, but his brothers and sisters, formed part of our family. I shall presently speak of the friendship which arose between myself and Napoleon's sisters, a friendship which one of them has entirely forgotten. When my mother quitted Corsica to follow my father to France, the friendly relations which subsisted between her and the Bonaparte family suffered no change by absence or distance. The conduct of my parents towards Bonaparte, the father, when he came to Montpellier

with his son and his brother-in-law, to die far from his country and all that was dear to him, should never be forgotten by either of the two families. It should be remembered by the one with gratitude, and by the other with that feeling of satisfaction which the performance of a good action creates. The other members of the Bonaparte family were also favourites of my mother. Lucien found in her more than a common friend. When he formed that strange union with Mademoiselle Boyer, my mother received his wife as her own daughter. Of our intimacy with Madame Joseph Bonaparte and Madame Leclerc, the details into which I shall enter in the course of these volumes will afford an accurate idea. My husband's connexion with Bonaparte commenced with the siege of Toulon, and from that time they continued united until Junot's death. Thus, I may say, that without having been always near Bonaparte, I possessed the most authentic means of being accurately informed of every action, private or public. It will be understood by what I have here stated, that while I pretend to be the only person who perfectly well knew every particularity of Napoleon, it is not mere presumption that prompts me to say so; the details which will be found in the following pages I derive from other sources than those which usually feed biographical sketches.

I shall commence this work by some details respecting my family and some distinguished individuals, such as Paoli, at the time when he diffused a ray of light upon his barbarous country. I shall relate my conversations—of which I kept memoranda—with MM. de Romansoff, Marcoff, Kalischeff, and Dirschkoff, who enjoyed the intimacy of the Czarina,* and acquainted me with the real causes of the Greek insurrection of 1770. As my family took an active part in the events of that period, I cannot be altogether unacquainted with them.

I shall speak of Corsica, the adopted country of the family of Comnene, and of the Greek origin of the Bonaparte family. The tomb of the Giant of glory rivets the interest of the world, therefore his birthplace cannot be a matter of indifference. The first part of these Memoirs will describe the dawn of that revolution, to all the vicissitudes of which I was a witness. Perhaps it will be said that I

* The Abbé Perrin, who resided for many years in the house of Count Panim, to whose children he was tutor, furnished me with a number of details respecting the barbarous court of Russia, the death of Peter and Paul, and other affairs of high interest, which might appear incredible if they rested on any authority but that which, like the Abbé Perrin's, is unquestionable.

was too young to observe and to retain in my memory all that passed at that period. I have already said, that being a passenger on board the vessel that was continually tossed by the storm, the least movement and the track it was taking were to me a constant source of reflection. I repeat, once more, that in those times we had no ordinary youth. Another part of these volumes will comprise a terrible moment of my existence: that sanguinary period when the French people seemed for a while to vie in ferocity with the wild beasts of the desert. But the military flag soon rallied under its protecting shade the honour and glory of France; and with magical rapidity the triumph of her arms was witnessed on the banks of the Rhine, on the summit of the Alps, in the marshes of Holland, on the lake of Zurich, and, above all, on the plains of Italy. Victory accompanied our armies, and wheresoever they went their track was marked by their blood. I am proud to say that the blood which flows in the veins of my sons was not spared by their father in the service of his country. But those days, so brilliant in our camps, were dull and gloomy in our cities; the latter were a prey to civil dissension. The terror of massacre had been succeeded by a terror no less frightful, produced by the continual conflict between anarchy and power. The termination of this conflict was the more doubtful, for anarchy was fostered in an element but too favourable to its growth; while, on the other hand, power, which was almost always usurped by force, and never delegated by a reasonable majority, could neither be awarded nor exercised without a struggle. Such contests always terminate in convulsions, and how many have we not seen! How often, when listening to the discussions which were maintained around me, have I heard the destruction of my unfortunate country predicted! Alas! France was doomed to linger out a longer career of misfortune! What was done one day was undone the next; but it is not so easy to build up as to pull down, and in France the truth of this commonplace proverb was forcibly verified. Next succeeded the directorial reign; that monstrous union of anarchy, tyranny, and weakness. I saw those *Pasquin Kings*, in whose hands the sceptre was a mere club, with which they struck until the blow became a wound. Their reign terminated, the consulate marked the dawn of a new era, and France once more rose from amidst wreck and ruin. Next came the days of the empire, that great and prodigious wonder! Doubtless the true republican regretted his invaded rights; but where is the French heart that does not beat at the recollection of that era of glory—on hearing the names of those men who marched to battle as they would go to a fete; who purchased

victory by a scar, and proclaimed France the mistress of nations from the Vistula to the Tagus? Thus I beheld the star of our prosperity at its summit; I saw it wane into obscurity, reappear, and sink a second time. During these changes my heart has been often afflicted; I have suffered deeply, and my silent sorrow has been more bitter than the loud despair of many others. However, it was even some gratification to French pride to see all Europe advancing to crush a sovereign of whom but a few days previously it had been the slave.

In preparing these Memoirs how many past recollections have revived! how many dormant griefs have awakened! In spite of the general fidelity of my memory, I occasionally met with dates and facts, the remembrance of which, though not effaced, had faded by the course of time. They were speedily restored; but I must confess that my task has been a laborious and painful one; and nothing could have urged me forward to its execution but the conviction that *it must be done.* It may perhaps be alleged that I could have answered in a pamphlet of fifty pages, all that has been said: I at first thought of doing so, but I found this impracticable. In taking up the pen my object was to make a complete, not a summary, refutation of the untruths that have been advanced. This could not be done in a few lines. It is not my intention to criminate any one: I shall merely state facts, and all shall be supported by *written* evidence. The autographic documents which I have deposited in the hands of my editor will be open to those who may wish to examine them. Among the attacks aimed at the Duke d'Abrantes, there is one of a very absurd nature. The assailant's memory betrayed him, and by a fortunate chance a letter in his own handwriting falsifies what he has said in his book: there is perhaps nothing more venomous than the sting of ridicule. With regard to what concerns me and my family in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, I conceive myself in duty bound to reply to it. I have always viewed as the height of absurdity that pride which is founded on an origin more or less illustrious. But if that pride be ridiculous, the usurpation of a great name, a false pretension to noble descent, is the extreme of baseness. Such being my opinion, it will readily be conceived that I am not inclined to pass over in silence that chapter in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* which treats of the family of my mother. I will prove that my grandfather and my uncles, far from setting up false claims to family greatness, wished on the contrary to extinguish a noble name, which, when stripped of the splendour with which it ought to be surrounded, becomes to its possessors a source of annoyance and humiliation. Such was the intention of my grandfather, the last privileged chief of the Greek colony, a

shadow of sovereignty, and a toy with which he wished to have no more concern.

He had but one daughter, who was my mother, and he made her vow never to consent to the reassumption of her family name, a vow which I am sure my mother would have religiously kept to this day had she lived. My grandfather died a young man. He was captain of cavalry in the French service (in the regiment de Vallière), a noble Corsican, and not a *farmer*, as the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* asserts. As to obtaining an acknowledgment of the dignity of the Comnene family, he entertained no such idea. My grandfather died in 1768, and the family was acknowledged in 1782; the letters patent are dated 1783 and 1784.

I know not if I have expressed the motives which have actuated me to publish this work: they are however pure and honourable. I consider the publication of these Memoirs to be a duty to my family, and above all to the memory of my husband. Often during political storms a veil is thrown over some part of an illustrious life: the arm of Junot, which for twenty-two years defended his country, is now in the grave, and cannot remove the veil with which jealousy and envy would envelop his fame. It remains therefore for me, the mother of his children, to fulfil that sacred duty, and throw in all the light and all the truth which can leave him to be fairly judged.

CHAPTER I.

The Comnene family—Place and date of my birth—The Greek Colony in Corsica—Constantine Comnenus—Treaty with the republic of Genoa—Prosperity of the colony—Destruction of the property of the Greeks—My grandfather wishes to resign his name—Abolition of the original rank of the Comnenes in Corsica—Appeal of my uncle Demetrius—Greek origin of the Bonaparte family.

I was born at Montpellier on the 6th of November, 1784. My family was then temporarily established at Languedoc, to enable my father the more easily to exercise the duties of an official appointment which he had obtained on his return from America. My mother, like myself, was born beneath the tent which her parents had pitched in a foreign land. From the shores of the Bosphorus her family had emigrated to the solitudes of the Taygeta, which they quitted to inhabit

the mountains of Corsica. I shall here insert a short explication relative to my family, as I shall have occasion to revert to it later.

When France became mistress of Corsica by the treaty which she concluded with the republic of Genoa, her troops had been long attempting the conquest or rather the reduction of that island, on the pretence that they were the allies of the Genoese.* But the Corsicans, intrenched in their wild rocks, and animated by an ardent love of liberty, set our troops at defiance; and they would never have been subdued had they not committed the error of provoking the hostility of the Greeks of the colony of Paomia, who never forgave them for having ravaged their plains, burned their houses, and destroyed their whole social existence. It required these just grounds of revenge to induce the Greeks to aid in the subjugation of a free people—they who during two hundred years had resisted a great nation in defence of their own rights and liberties.

The Greek colony of Paomia was composed of refugee families whom the senate of Genoa had received when, led by Constantine Stephanopoulos, and flying from the civil discord of their country, they left Mania to seek an asylum in Italy. The Greeks of that part of the Peloponnesus were then subject to a chief: that chief was still one of the Comneni. Constantine Comnenus, the tenth Protogeras of Mania, on the 3d of October, 1675, quitted his adopted country, and established himself in another land of exile. He was followed by three thousand individuals, who preferred exile to the slavery of the Mussulmans. The Greek colony landed at Genoa on the 1st of January, 1676. The definitive arrangements were concluded between the senate and Constantine Comnenus. When they were signed, the new colonists once more embarked, and arrived in Corsica on the 14th of March, 1676. The districts of Paomia, Salogna, and Reviuda, belonging to the republic of Genoa, were ceded to the Greeks on certain conditions, which Constantine pledged himself should be observed. The senate of Genoa secured to him the title of *Privileged Chief;* and he as well as the whole family of the Comneni were treated with marked honour: the clergy received orders to offer him incense on his arrival.

But the happiness of the colony was of short duration. The colo-

* This was in the reign of Louis XV. The Duke de Choiseul, then minister for foreign affairs, and the Marquis de la Sorba, plenipotentiary of the republic of Genoa, concluded the treaty, by the terms of which France was to occupy the island for ten years. At the expiration of that period, when it was expected the spirit of revolt might be quenched, Corsica was to be restored to its masters.

nists of Niolo and Vico became jealous of the new comers, and the protection afforded to them by the republic. The Greeks enjoyed tranquillity only fifty-three years, from 1676 to 1729, when the Corsicans rose to emancipate themselves from the yoke of the Genoese. The Vicolesians, taking advantage of the difficult situation in which the Greeks stood, solicited their assistance, which being refused, they destroyed their property. In vain did Cecaldi and Giafferi, the two leaders of the insurrection, desire them to refrain from molesting the Greeks: they continued their violence; plantations were destroyed, and houses burnt. But they gratified their hatred and envy at their own expense; for all Corsica had benefited by the presence of the Greeks. This insurrection crowned the disastrous vicissitudes to which the Greeks had been continual victims for the space of two centuries. The misfortunes of their original country seemed to pursue them in their new asylum! They were obliged to quit Paomia and retire to Ajaccio.

At this time the privileged chief of the Greeks was John Stephanopoulos Comnenus. He was the first of his family born the subject of a foreign power, and he was a man worthy of his Spartan and Messenian descent. With despair he beheld the departure of the colony for Ajaccio. He stood with his arms crossed on his bosom, and saw women, children, and old men abandon an asylum created by their fathers. It was a sight which might justly call forth a vow of vengeance! John Comnenus would not quit the ruins of Paomia until the colony should be in safety on the road to Ajaccio. He stopped behind, and being intercepted by a troop of insurgent Corsicans, he had only time to throw himself with eighty men who accompanied him into the tower of Omigua, an indifferent place on the sea-coast. There he was besieged by more than three thousand Corsicans. Comnenus and his Greeks defended themselves with the courage of lions; but at the expiration of three days their provisions and ammunition failed them. "Shall we surrender?" exclaimed John Comnenus in a tone which indicated that he knew what would be the answer of his faithful followers. "No!" they replied. "Follow me, then," returned their chief, and placing himself at their head, he made a sortie from the fort, attacked the Corsicans, made a great number of prisoners, and returned victorious to Ajaccio.

John Comnenus had five sons, of whom, the eldest, Theodore, entered the church, and died at the age of twenty-six, just after he had been created Archbishop of the Greeks in Rome. He was my grand uncle. Constantine succeeded his father. With the courage and excellent qualifications of John, he combined a greater knowledge of the world, which he had acquired in his travels. He was a soldier at

twelve years of age, and at seventeen he marched at the head of the Greeks, of whom the republic of Genoa acknowledged him the privileged chief by a treaty, as it had done with regard to the three chiefs who preceded him. Constantine died young; but though his life was short it was imbittered by trouble. This inspired him, singularly enough, with an aversion for his own origin. This aversion became so strong that he conceived the design of extinguishing his family. This design was confirmed when, on the union of Corsica with France, he experienced the most revolting injustice. He had four children: three sons and a daughter, who was my mother. He made his eldest son, John Stephen Comnenus, enter the church. The second was sent to Rome to the college of the *Propaganda-Fida*, and was also destined for the ecclesiastical profession. The third, who was very young, was also doomed to eternal celibacy, and was to enter the church on attaining the proper age. Thus, when my grandfather died, he quitted the world with the firm conviction that his name would become extinct. On hearing of his father's dangerous illness, my uncle Demetrius left the college of the *Propaganda-Fida* and hurried to Corsica. But his father died two days before his arrival. The loss of a parent was not the only grief that awaited him on his natal shore. The original rank which Genoa had secured to his family, by various treaties passed between the republic and the Comneni, was abolished, and the personal property of the family united to the crown of France. Demetrius was painfully affected at this breach of faith; for it can be called by no other name, considering the voluntary sacrifices which the Greeks had made for the cause of France. The young chief was then only sixteen. When he attained the proper age, and laid his just claims at the foot of the throne, they were favourably listened to. The government granted him a compensation for his property, which had already been disposed of. As to his other claims, he was informed that the dignity which his ancestors had possessed was incompatible with the usages of the French monarchy; but that he might enjoy all the privileges assigned to nobility, and for that purpose he had only to prove his extraction. After an investigation before the king's council, a direct filiation from David II., last emperor of Trebisonde, who was killed by order of Mahomet II., to Demetrius Comnenus was acknowledged, and confirmed by letters patent of Louis XVI., dated September 1, 1783.

I will now describe the close friendship and intimacy which subsisted between the Bonaparte family and mine. We were indeed united by the bonds of origin as well as of friendship, for it is a curious fact that Napoleon Bonaparte was reputed to be of Greek descent.

CHAPTER II.

Calomeros and Bonaparte—My father's departure for America—Intimacy between my mother and Madame Lætitia—Bonaparte's boyhood—The basket of grapes and the flogging—Saveria, and the Bonaparte family—Character of the Corsicans—My father's return—My birth, and my mother's illness.

When Constantine Comnenus landed in Corsica, in 1676, at the head of the Greek colony, he had with him several sons, one of whom was named Calomeros. This son he sent to Florence, on a mission to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Constantine dying before the return of his son, the grand duke prevailed on the young Greek to renounce Corsica, and fix his abode in Tuscany. After some interval of time, an individual named Calomeros came from Italy—indeed from Tuscany, and fixed his abode in Corsica, where his descendants formed the family of Buonaparte; for the name *Calomeros*, literally Italianized, signified *buona parte* or *bella parte*.* The only question is, whether the Calomeros who left Corsica, and the Calomeros who came there, have a direct filiation. Two facts, however, are certain, namely, the departure of the one, and the arrival of the other. It is a singular circumstance that the Comneni, in speaking of the Bonaparte family, always designate them by the names *Calomeros*, *Calomeri*, or *Calomeriani*, according as they allude to one individual or several collectively. Both families were united by the most intimate friendship.

When the Greeks were obliged to abandon Paomia to escape the persecutions of the insurgent Corsicans, they established themselves temporarily in towns which remained faithful to the republic of Genoa. When, at a subsequent period, Cargesa was granted to the Greeks, for the purpose of forming a new establishment, a few Greek families continued to reside at Ajaccio. Among these was the family of the privileged chief; and my mother lived alternately at Ajaccio and Cargesa. At this time she contracted a friendship with Lætitia Ramolini, the mother of Napoleon. They were about the same age, and both extremely beautiful. Their beauty, however, was of so different a character, that no feeling of jealousy could arise between them. Madame Lætitia Bonaparte was graceful and pretty; but without any filial

* Napoleon omitted the u in Buonaparte while general-in-chief in May, 1796.

vanity I may truly say that I never, in all my life, saw so fine a woman as my mother. At fourteen, she was the gayest and most sprightly young girl in the whole colony, and it might be said, in the whole island, but for Lætitia Ramolini. Lætitia was indeed a lovely woman. Those who knew her in advanced life thought her countenance somewhat harsh; but that expression, instead of being caused by any austerity of disposition, seemed on the contrary to have been produced by timidity. She was a woman who evinced very superior qualities in all the circumstances in which she was placed, in bad as well as good fortune. Her son rendered her justice, though somewhat tardily. He himself helped to keep up an erroneous opinion respecting her; and though he corrected it, yet the impression was given and received.

Previously to entering into negotiation with the republic of Genoa, France supplied troops for the purpose of reducing the Corsicans to obedience. Among the French who were connected with the army, there was a young man of twenty, possessing an agreeable person. He fenced like the celebrated Saint-George, was a delightful performer on the violin, and though distinguished by the elegant manners of a man of rank, he was nevertheless only a commoner. He had said, "I will risk my fortune, and will advance myself in the world;" and he had said it with that sort of determination which nothing can resist, because it overcomes every thing. On his arrival in Corsica he had already an honourable fortune to offer to the lady whom he might wish to make his wife. He fixed his choice on the pearl of the island. He sought and obtained the hand of my mother. This gentleman was M. de Permon, my father.

My parents left Corsica and came to France, where my father's affairs demanded his presence. Some years after, he obtained an important appointment in America, whither he proceeded, taking with him my brother, then only eight years of age. My mother, with the rest of her young family, repaired to Corsica, to reside with my grandmother, until my father's return. This was before my birth. It was on my mother's return to Corsica that she first saw Napoleon. He was then a child, and she has often carried him in her arms. He was the playmate of an elder sister of mine, who died a melancholy death. Napoleon recollected her perfectly, and used to speak of her after he came to Paris. He was fond of conversing about Corsica, and often, after having dined at our family table, he would sit before the fireplace, his arms crossed before him, and would say: "Come, Signora Panoria, let us talk about Corsica, and Signora Lætitia." This was the name he always gave his mother, when he was speaking of her to

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persons with whom he was intimate. "How is Signora Lætitia?" he used to say to me:—or when addressing her, he would say: "Well, Signora Lætitia, how do you like the court? You do not like it, I see. That is because you do not receive company enough. I have given you a handsome palace, a fine estate, and a million a year, and yet you live like a citizen's wife of the Rue Saint Denis. Come, come, you must see more company; but company of another kind from the C——s and Cl——de——s." My mother and my uncles have a thousand times assured me that Napoleon in his boyhood had none of that singularity of character which has often been attributed to him. He had good health, and was in other respects like other boys.

Madame Bonaparte had brought with her to France a nurse, named Saveria. It was curious to hear this woman speak of the family she had brought up, each member of which was seated on a throne. She related a number of curious anecdotes respecting them, and I used to be very fond of conversing with her. I observed that she was less attached to some members of the family than to others, and I asked her the reason of this. As I know not whether she may yet be living, I will say nothing to compromise her with persons to whom her preference might be offensive. All I shall say is, that she adored the Emperor and Lucien. She one day described to me several little scenes connected with the boyhood of Napoleon, who remained in Corsica until he was nine years of age; and she confirmed to me one fact, which I had frequently heard from his mother, viz., that when he was reprimanded for any fault, he seldom cried. In Corsica, the practice of beating children is common in all classes of society. When Napoleon happened to be beat, he would sometimes shed a few tears, but they were soon over; and he would never utter a word in the way of begging pardon. On this subject, I will relate an anecdote which I heard from himself. He told it me to give me an example of moderation.

He was one day accused by one of his sisters of having eaten a basket full of grapes, figs, and citrons, which had come from the garden of *his uncle the canon*. None but those who were acquainted with the Bonaparte family can form any idea of the enormity of this offence. To eat fruit belonging to the *uncle the canon* was infinitely more criminal than to eat grapes and figs which might be claimed by any body else. An inquiry took place. Napoleon denied the fact, and was whipped. He was told that if he would beg pardon he should be forgiven. He protested that he was innocent, but he was not believed. If I recollect rightly, his mother was at the time on a visit to M. de Marbeuf, or some other friend. The result of Napoleon's

obstinacy was, that he was kept three whole days upon bread and cheese, and that cheese was not *broccio*.* However, he would not cry; he was dull, but not sulky. At length, on the fourth day of his punishment, a little friend of Marianne Bonaparte returned from the country, and, on hearing of Napoleon's disgrace, she confessed that she and Marianne had eaten the fruit. It was now Marianne's turn to be punished. When Napoleon was asked why he had not accused his sister, he replied that though he suspected that she was guilty, yet out of consideration to her little friend, who had no share in the falsehood, he had said nothing. He was then only seven years of age.

This fact, which would have been nothing extraordinary in any other child, appeared to me worthy of a place among recollections which are connected with the whole life of Napoleon. It is somewhat characteristic of *the man*. I ought to add that the affair was never forgotten by Napoleon. Of this I observed a proof in 1801, at a fête given by Madame Bacciochi—formerly Marianne Bonaparte—at Neuilly, where she resided with Lucien.

Saveria told me that Napoleon was never a pretty boy, as Joseph had been; his head always appeared too large for his body, a defect common to the Bonaparte family. When Napoleon grew up, the peculiar charm of his countenance lay in his eye, especially in the mild expression it assumed in his moments of kindness. His anger, to be sure, was frightful, and though I am no coward, I never could look at him in his fits of rage without shuddering. Though his smile was captivating, yet the expression of his mouth when disdainful or angry could scarcely be seen without terror. But that forehead which seemed formed to bear the crowns of a whole world; those hands, of which the most coquettish woman might have been vain, and whose white skin covered muscles of iron; in short, of all that personal beauty which distinguished Napoleon as a young man, no traces were discernible in the boy. Saveria spoke truly when she said, that of all the children of Signora Lætitia, the Emperor was the one from whom future greatness was least to be prognosticated. Saveria liked me *tolerably well*. I make use of this expression because she detested France, and the hatred or love of a Corsican must not be measured by the ordinary feelings of mankind. How often has Saveria wept bitterly when she has heard me repeat that beautiful ode on Italy which contains these lines:—

O Italia, Italia;
O sia men bella, o almen piu forte!

* A favourite kind of cheese in Corsica.

I obtained some grace in the eyes of Saveria because, though I was not a Corsican, I was, at least, not a French woman. I spoke Italian too, and therefore I was not absolutely a savage. Early one morning she came into the room when I was sitting at the piano playing a little song which is sung by the goatherds in the mountains of Corsica, and which I intended to arrange as a *notturno* for two voices, for the purpose of singing it to Madame. Saveria heard it, and she stood sobbing behind my chair. I rallied her on her sensibility. "*Basta, basta,*" she exclaimed, "*buon sangue non è buggiardo. E si vede, signora mia benedetta, si vede che il vostro è rosso e caldo, si vede. E! che non siete di questi cani di Francesi! Vi sentite voi, E! . . . .*"*

Saveria was a very superior woman in her way. She was a true model of those Corsicans whom the Romans feared to buy for slaves, but every one of whom would lay down his life to serve the master he loved.

The Corsicans felt that there was a sort of bad faith in the conduct of France towards them. At the onset it was the opinion of many of the Corsicans that the French intended to make themselves masters of the country. The character of the man who placed himself at their head speaks volumes for the justice of their cause. Paoli is a great character in history. Who will dare to despise the country which gave birth to him?

My family prides itself in its Greek descent, but this is mere absurdity. A race which has lived for two hundred and fifty years in a country must be considered as the children of the soil. My mother, proud as she was of her Greek origin, was, nevertheless, a true daughter of Corsica. When she spoke Italian to Bonaparte, he would sometimes pretend to have forgotten it, and would say he was *a Frenchman.* "Come, come, Napoleon, none of this nonsense," she would say, with that lively air which in her was so peculiarly charming; "what do you mean by *You are a Frenchman?* Does anybody accuse you of being a Chinese? You are a Frenchman, but you were born in one of the provinces of France called Corsica. A man may be an Auvergnese, but he is, nevertheless, a Frenchman. Who would not be proud to be the countryman of Paoli? No more of this absurdity, or I shall think the honours of your republic have turned your head." In this manner my mother addressed him after the 13th Vendémiaire.

* "Good blood never belies itself; and, my dear lady, it is easy to see that yours is red and warm, and that you have not sprung from those dogs of French. You can feel."

By hearing the expression of my mother's feelings respecting Corsica, I have imbibed a notion of that country very different from that which is usually entertained. How often, during our sanguinary revolution, have I seen my mother weep, while she thought of the mountains of her island! "There every man is free," she would exclaim, while she every moment trembled lest she should be dragged to the scaffold. But the recollection of poor Saveria has led me far out of my course. I will now return to Ajaccio, where I left my mother and her two children.

During her residence in that place my mother renewed her intimacy with her friend Lætitia and her children. Napoleon was then in France. On her return thither my mother promised her good offices in favour of the young Corsican if he should be in want of friends at such a distance from his family. A coldness subsisted between M. Charles Bonaparte and my mother's family, from what cause I know not: however that is a matter of very little importance.

At the close of the American war my father returned to his country, where he purchased the situation of receiver-general of departemental taxes. The duties of this situation caused him to fix his abode temporarily at Montpellier, and an event which had well nigh been attended with fatal consequences, detained him there far beyond the period he had fixed upon. My mother was at that time pregnant with me. She was in perfect health, and there was every reason to believe that her delivery would be attended with a favourable result. On the 6th of November, after having supped with Madame de Moncan, the wife of the second commandant of the province, she returned home quite well and in excellent spirits. At one o'clock she retired to bed, and at two she was delivered of a daughter. Next morning it was discovered that her right side and part of her left were struck with paralysis. The physicians of Montpellier, a town then celebrated for medical science, prescribed for her in vain. They could neither relieve her disease nor discover its cause. My poor mother spent three months in agony: she was scarcely able to articulate. At length she was cured, and her cure was no less extraordinary than her illness.

A countryman who brought fruit and vegetables for sale to the house, one day saw the female servants weeping in great distress. He inquired the cause, and was informed of the situation of my mother. He requested to be conducted to my father; "I ask for no reward," said he, "but from what I have heard from your servants, I think I know the nature of your lady's illness, and if you will permit me I will cure her in a week."

My father was at that moment plunged in the deepest despair; for

he had that very morning heard from the physicians that my mother was in great danger, and they afforded him no hope of her recovery. In that hour of anguish he very naturally seized at any thing which could afford the slightest chance. "What effect does your remedy produce?" said he to the countryman. The man replied that it was topical, and, therefore, unattended by any danger to the organs of life; but he admitted that its application would be attended with the most excruciating pain. My father summoned the doctors who were in attendance on my mother. All were men of acknowledged talent. "Nature is unbounded in her benefits," said M. Barthès, "how do we know what she may have in reserve through the hands of this man? Let him try his remedy." My mother was asked whether she felt sufficient strength to undergo an increase of pain. She declared she would submit to any thing. She had already relinquished all hope of life. The countryman asked permission to return home. His village was not far off, and he promised to return next morning. My father was alarmed when he heard that the man came from Saint-Gilles;* but the man appeared perfectly sane. His preparations were rather methodical. He made five little round loaves or rolls: the dough was compounded by himself. The efficient ingredients were of herbs which he gathered, and in which consisted his secret. He boiled these herbs, and with their juice, added to a little strong beer, and mixed with maize flour, he made a dough, which he baked into loaves. While they were hot from the oven he cut them into halves, and applied them to the part affected. I have often heard my mother say that no words could convey an idea of the painful sensation she experienced, and have seen her turn pale at the recollection of it. This torture was repeated every day for the space of a week. At the expiration of that time the pain ceased, and she was able to move her limbs. A month afterwards my mother was up and in her balcony.

It is an extraordinary fact, that during her illness she had lost all recollection of her pregnancy and delivery. My father at first supposed that the agonizing pain my mother had suffered had alienated her affection from the infant to whom she had given birth. As soon as he observed my mother's indifference towards me, he ordered the nurse to keep me in a distant part of the house. His affection both for his wife and child dictated this order, for my mother was yet in too weak a state to bear any agitation of mind. In the month of

* A village near Montpellier, remarkable for the prevalence of insanity among its inhabitants. Madness may be said to be indigenous at Saint-Gilles. There is scarcely a house in the place which does not contain a lunatic apartment.

March, about four months after her recovery, my mother was seated in her balcony inhaling the balmy freshness of a spring day. My father was with her, and they were arranging a plan for spending a summer which should compensate for all her recent sufferings. They proposed going to Bagnères. In the midst of their conversation she suddenly shrieked, and with one hand seizing my father's arm, she pointed with the other to a child which a nurse was carrying in the street. She did not know that it was her own, but she exclaimed, "Charles, I have an infant. Where is it? Is not that my child?" My brother, who was seventeen years of age, has often told me that nothing could convey an idea of my mother's joy when her child was placed in her arms. She was to me the fondest of mothers. She insisted on having my cradle placed beside her bed, and the nurse slept in an adjoining chamber. Every morning when I awoke she pressed me to her bosom, and said, "Oh! my dear child, how dearly must I love you to make amends for five months' banishment from your mother's heart!" My beloved parent faithfully kept her word. I have been assured, that for a woman to lose the recollection of her delivery is by no means so wonderful a circumstance as may at first sight appear. Baudeloque, to whom I related the circumstance, told me that he had witnessed more extraordinary cases than that of my mother.

CHAPTER III.

My mother's drawing-room—The Countess de Perigord—The Duchess de Mailly and the Prince de Chalais—Louis XV. and the Countess de Perigord—The Duchess de Mailly and the Princess de Lamballe—Bonaparte's first arrival in Paris—His intention of presenting a memorial to the Minister of War—His character when a young man—His first lodging in Paris.

We arrived in Paris in 1785. My mother could not reconcile herself to a country life were it ever so agreeable, and my father was equally desirous of returning to town. He had long wished to purchase the office of one of the farmers of public revenue, and at this very juncture M. Rougeau was disposed to sell his situation. Negotiations were immediately opened by the friends of both parties. My father resolved to manage this business personally, and that circumstance determined our hasty journey. My father wished to see a great deal of company, and after the fashion of the time, set a day of

the week apart for giving dinner parties. My mother possessed every qualification for an agreeable hostess. Her good temper and frankness of manner made her a favourite with every body: she united to a rare beauty of person, grace, tact, and, above all, a natural intelligence. She was, however, exceedingly deficient in education. She used to say she had never read but one book, Telemachus; but, in spite of that, those who had once enjoyed her conversation, never could quit her society without reluctance and regret. How many poets and distinguished literary characters have I seen spell-bound by the charm, not of her person, but of her manners! No one could tell a story with more piquant originality. Often have my brother and myself sat up until three o'clock in the morning listening to her. But what particularly marked her character was her perfection in that most difficult art of presiding in her drawing-room, or, as the Emperor used to style it, "*l'art de tenir son salon.*"

Of the friends whom my mother had made at Montpellier, she rejoined one at Paris with great satisfaction. This was the Count de Perigord, the uncle of M. de Talleyrand, and the brother of the Archbishop of Rheims. He was governor of the states of Languedoc, wore the *cordon bleu*, and though as great a dignitary as one could wish to see, was still the most amiable and worthy of men. My parents knew him during his presidency, and the friendship they contracted lasted during their lives. His children, the Duchess de Mailly and the Prince de Chalais, inherited their father's excellent disposition, and after his death they gave my mother proofs of their friendship and esteem. Of the Count de Perigord I retain the most perfect recollection. He was very kind to me; and children are ever grateful for attentions bestowed on them. I remember he used often to give me very expensive things; but had I known their value, which I did not, the presents he made me would not have inspired my regard for him more than for any other of our visitors, all of whom were in the habit of making me presents; it was the notice he took of me; his readiness to praise any just or smart remark I made, and his constant desire to save me from reproof: this it was that made me love him. I can see him even now entering the spacious drawing-room of the hotel we occupied on the Quai Conti; treading cautiously with his club-foot, leading me by the hand; for no sooner was his name announced, than I was at his side. He, on his part, was never weary of my company; on the contrary, he always encouraged my prattle. I loved him, and painfully regretted his loss.

It was the fate of his wife the Countess de Perigord to attract the notice of Louis XV. This degrading distinction could not but be

repugnant to the feelings of a virtuous woman; and the Countess de Perigord saw in it nothing but an insult. She silently withdrew herself from court before the King offered to name her his favourite. On her return the King's attentions were fixed on a new object, and the virtue of Madame de Perigord was all that dwelt upon the memory of the monarch. The Countess's daughter, the Duchess de Mailly, the lady in waiting, and cherished friend of Marie Antoinette, died young. The Queen was strongly attached to her. She used to call her *ma grande.** However, notwithstanding this attachment, Madame de Mailly's feelings received a wound sufficiently severe. This was about the period of the rise of the Princess de Lamballe, and many circumstances combined to mortify Madame de Mailly. She was moreover in a bad state of health, and gave in her resignation.

Her brother, the Prince de Chalais, was a nobleman in the literal signification of the term. He was a man of the most scrupulous honour, and a most rigid observer of all the forms which belonged to his rank. When a mere youth he was remarked at the court of Louis XVI. as one who was likely to distinguish himself in after years. On his return from emigration, when I saw him at my mother's, I could easily discern that all I had heard of his excellent character was correct.

The Count de Perigord foresaw early the misfortunes which befell the king, and consequently France. He was an enemy to emigration, and used to say that the proper place for men of his order was always near the throne: in peace to adorn it, and in times of trouble to defend it. The refugees at Worms and Coblentz could not seduce him from the path which he considered it his duty to pursue. The unfortunate gentleman nearly became the victim of his resolution.

My mother's first care on arriving in Paris was to inquire after Napoleon Bonaparte. He was at that time in the military school of Paris, having quitted Brienne in the September of the preceding year. My uncle Demetrius had met him just after he alighted from the coach which brought him to town; "and truly," said my uncle, "he had the appearance of a fresh importation. I met him in the Palais Royal, where he was gaping and staring with wonder at every thing he saw. He would have been an excellent subject for sharpers, if, indeed, he had had anything worth taking!" My uncle invited him to dine at his house; for though he was a bachelor he did not choose to dine at a coffee-house. He told my mother that Napoleon was very morose. "I fear," added he, "that that young man has more

* The Duchess de Mailly was very tall. She measured five feet four inches (French measure), without her high-heeled shoes.

self-conceit than is suitable to his condition. When he dined with me he began to declaim violently against the luxury of the young men of the military school. After a little he turned the conversation on Mania, and the present education of the young Maniotes, drawing a comparison between it and the ancient Spartan system of education. His observations on this head he told me he intended to embody in a memorial to be presented to the minister of war. All this, depend upon it, will bring him under the displeasure of his comrades, and it will be lucky if he escape being run through."

A few days afterwards my mother saw Napoleon, and then his irritability was at its height. He would scarcely bear any observations, even if made in his favour, and I am convinced that it is to this uncontrollable irritability that he owed the reputation of having been ill-tempered in his boyhood, and splenetic in his youth. My father, who was acquainted with almost all the heads of the military school, obtained leave for him sometimes to come out for recreation. On account of an accident—a sprain, if I recollect right—Napoleon once spent a whole week at our house. To this day, whenever I pass the *Quai Conti*, I cannot help looking up at a garret window at the left angle of the house, on the third floor. That was Napoleon's chamber when he paid us a visit, and a neat little room it was. My brother used to occupy the one next to it. The two young men were nearly of the same age: my brother, perhaps, had the advantage of a year or fifteen months. My mother had recommended him to cultivate the friendship of young Bonaparte; but my brother complained how unpleasant it was to find only cold politeness where he expected affection. This repulsiveness on the part of Napoleon was almost offensive, and must have been sensibly felt by my brother, who was not only remarkable for the mildness of his temper and the amenity and grace of his manner, but whose society was courted in the most distinguished circles of Paris on account of his talents. He perceived in Bonaparte a kind of acerbity and bitter irony, of which he long endeavoured to discover the cause. "I believe," said Albert one day to my mother, "that the poor young man feels keenly his dependent situation." "But," exclaimed my mother, "his situation is not dependent; and I trust you have not made him feel that he is not quite at home while he stays here."

"Albert is not wrong in this matter," said my father, who happened to be present. "Napoleon suffers on account of his pride, but it is pride not to be censured. He knows you; he knows, too, that your family and his are in Corsica equal with regard to fortune. He is the son of Lætitia Bonaparte, and Albert is yours. I believe that

you are even related; now he cannot easily reconcile all this with the difference in the education he receives gratis in the military school, separated from his family, and deprived of those attentions which he sees here lavishingly bestowed upon our children." "But you are describing envy, not pride," replied my mother. "No, there is a great difference between envy and the feelings by which this young man is disturbed; and I fancy I know the human heart well enough to understand the workings of his. He suffers, and perhaps more keenly in our house than elsewhere. You are warm-hearted, but you cannot comprehend how misplaced kindness may sometimes fail to effect a cure. When you wished to make use of the credit of M. de Falgueyreytes to obtain leave of absence for Napoleon for more than a day or two, I told you you were doing wrong. You would not listen to me. The warmth of your friendship for the mother has caused you to place the son in a continually painful situation; for painful it must be, since the reflection will recur to him, Why is not my family situated like this?" "Absurd," cried my mother; "to reason thus, would be both foolish and wicked in him."

"He would be neither more foolish nor more wicked than the rest of the world. It is but feeling like a man. What is the reason he has been in a constant state of ill-humour since his arrival here? Why does he so loudly declaim against the *indecent luxury*—to use his own words—of all his comrades? Why? because he is every moment making a comparison between their situation and his own! He thinks it ridiculous that these young men should keep servants, when he has none. He finds fault with two courses at dinner, because, when they have their *pic-nics*, he is unable to contribute his share. The other day I was told by Dumarsay, the father of one of his comrades, that it was in agitation to give one of the masters a *déjeuné*, and that each scholar would be expected to contribute a sum certainly too large for such boys. Napoleon's reprehension is so far just. Well! I saw him this morning, and found him more than usually gloomy. I guessed the reason, and broke the ice at once by offering him the small sum he wanted for the occasion. He coloured deeply, but presently his countenance resumed its usual pale yellow hue. He refused my offer." "That was because you did not make it with sufficient delicacy," cried my mother. "You men are always such bunglers."

"When I saw the young man so unhappy," continued my father, without being disconcerted by my mother's warmth of manner, to which he was accustomed. "I invented an untruth, which heaven will

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Charles Cornwallis

doubtless pardon. I told him that before his father expired in our arms at Montpellier, he gave me a small sum to be applied to the wants of his son in cases of emergency. Napoleon looked at me steadfastly, with so scrutinizing a gaze, that he almost intimidated me. 'Since this money comes from my father, sir,' said he, 'I accept it; but had it been a loan, I could not have received it. My mother has already too many burthens, and I must not increase them by expenses beyond my means, particularly when they are imposed upon me by the stupid folly of my comrades.' You see, then," continued my father, "if his pride is so easily wounded at the school by strangers, what must he not suffer here, whatever tenderness we may show him? Albert must not be less kind and attentive to him; although I very much doubt whether it will lead to any mutual friendship."

CHAPTER IV.

Death of Bonaparte's father in my mother's house—Joseph Bonaparte and M. Fesch—Removal of my family to Paris—Details and portraits—M. de Saint-Priest, M. Séguier, and M. Duvidal de Montferrier—Madame de Lamarlière—A wedding feast at Robespierre's—The Queen at the Conciergerie, and Madame Richard—MM. d'Aigrefeuille and Cambacérès.

I MUST now recur to some events previous to those detailed in my last chapter: for this little derangement of dates, I trust the reader will pardon me.

While we were residing at Montpellier, my father, on returning home one day, told my mother a curious piece of news: he said he had just heard that three Corsicans had arrived at a miserable inn in the town, and that one of them was very ill. "Is it possible?" exclaimed my mother, with her usual animation of manner. "Go and inquire, I beg of you. How can you come and tell me that one of my countrymen is ill at an inn in Montpellier? Charles, this is unkind in you." With these words my mother almost forced my father out of the house. On his return, she learned with mingled feelings of grief and joy, that her sick countryman, for whom she had felt interested while he was unknown to her, was no other than the husband of Lætitia Ramolini! "He is very ill," said my father; "and I think he cannot be well attended where he is. We must get him removed to a private house." "My dear," observed my mother,

"recollect how much you suffered when you fell ill at Philadelphia, with no one to attend you but servants, and a boy of nine years old. It is our duty to save our friends from such misery." My father did not like the Corsicans. He was willing to show M. Bonaparte all the attention which his situation demanded; but it required all the influence of my mother to induce him to receive the invalids into his house.

Some of the numerous friends we had at Montpellier, many of whom are still living, have often described to me the praiseworthy conduct of my mother on that occasion. She was young, beautiful, and rich, and surrounded by a circle of admiring friends: and yet she was seldom from the bed-side of the sick stranger. All that fortune could procure to alleviate the sufferings of a protracted illness, was furnished by my parents with a delicacy which concealed from the invalid and his relations the difficulty which was frequently experienced in gratifying the capricious wishes of a dying man. I say nothing of pecuniary sacrifices; but kindness of heart certainly deserves gratitude. My mother was at M. Bonaparte's bed-side when he breathed his last, like an angel sent from heaven to soothe his dying moments. He strongly recommended to her his young son Napoleon, who had just left Brienne, and entered the military school at Paris.*

My mother did not confine herself to her pious attention to the husband of her friend. Joseph Bonaparte and his uncle Fesch received from her and my father all the consolation which friendship can offer to an afflicted heart; and when they departed for Corsica, every thing that could contribute to the comfort of their journey was provided by my father. I have seen Joseph Bonaparte often since that time; and he constantly alluded to the infinite obligations he lay under to my family. Excellent man! For King Joseph I always entertained a high respect. The world has been unjust to him as well as to other members of his family, because he had been guilty of some venial faults, which would have been passed over in the chivalrous reign of Louis XIV., applauded in the profligate reign of Louis XV., and tolerated in the degenerate reign of Louis XVI. But he laid his conduct open to censure. And in what place? In Spain.—And why? Because, perhaps, the mistress of the Grand Inquisitor became his favourite. Joseph Bonaparte left Montpellier with his uncle, who was about his own age, if, indeed, he was not something younger.

My parents removed from Languedoc to Paris. They left Mont-

* Napoleon left Brienne on the 14th of October, 1784.

pellier with regret, for they left behind them many beloved friends. Death, however, deprived them of several in one year. One of these was M. de Saint-Priest, Intendant of Languedoc, a man universally beloved and esteemed. Another loss no less profoundly felt by my father, was that of M. Séguier, of Nismes. In one of those daily excursions which he made either to Narbonne or to the environs of Montpellier, my father met M. de Séguier while he was botanizing near the ruins of the temple of Diana. My father had a great taste for botany, and they soon became friends. He used to speak to him of the mountains of Corsica, where he had often lost himself while searching for plants, and of the botanical curiosities which those regions contain. M. de Séguier wished to make a journey thither; but my father wrote to one of his cousins, who, like himself, was a botanist, and the plants were transmitted to France in all their pristine freshness. My father used often to go from Montpellier to Nismes, where he invariably found M. de Séguier either engaged in his favourite science, or in antiquarian researches. He died of apoplexy at an advanced age, on the 1st of September, 1784. In the following year, the province of Languedoc had to regret the death of its Syndic General, the Marquis de Montferrier, a distinguished friend of art and science, to whom the province of Languedoc is indebted for many of its noblest monuments, particularly the construction of the new *Pont du Guard.*

These three men were the particular friends of my father or mother, and being my countrymen they have a right to this feeble tribute of my respect in a work in which my recollections are the only annals I consult. I have now to notice another friend of my family, whom I cannot pass by without a brief description.

At Saint-Roch, near the third pillar of the Chapel of the Virgin, on the left as you enter by the grand portal, a lady may be seen dressed in black, or in silk of a dark colour. On her head she always wears a very large bonnet of black gros-de-naples, over which is a green veil. The children call her *the lady with the green veil*, and the poor give her the name of *the good lady*. When she enters the chapel it is easy to perceive that she is familiar with the house of God. The beadle, the assistant, and the sacristan, respectfully make their obedience to her. Formerly she used to bring several prayer-books with her; but now she prays without a book, for she cannot see; but she does not pray with the less fervour. Sometimes she joins in the sacred choir, and then, those who are placed near her hear the clear and silvery voice of a young girl, singing to the glory of heaven. The projecting brim of her bonnet conceals the face, but two small white hands counting the beads of a rosary reveal to the curious observer, that she who

vidual who has played a conspicuous part on the scene of life. I allude to Cambacérès. He was counsellor of the *Cour des Aides* at Montpellier. At the time he was a mere acquaintance of my parents, and he subsequently became the friend of Junot and myself: whenever I solicited his assistance upon any occasion, I always found him ready to serve me. If the thing were impossible he told me so candidly, for he never made deceitful promises. Indeed Cambacérès was an honest man in every sense of the word, and party spirit has vainly endeavoured to assail him. His honour, integrity, and the amiability of his manners, made him generally beloved. Cambacérès was in easy circumstances, though not rich, when he was at Montpellier. He was a relative of the Marquis de Montferrier, whom, as well as d'Aigrefeuille, he remembered when he rose to greatness and power. As to his political life I shall have occasion to speak of that in another place.

CHAPTER V.

Marianne Bonaparte at Saint-Cyr—Humbled pride—Bonaparte made sub-lieutenant—His first appearance in uniform—His singular present to my sister—Scene at Malmaison—The Countess d'Escarbagnas and the Marquis de Carabas.

Joseph Bonaparte had addressed a letter to my uncle Demetrius, thanking him for his kind attention to Marianne Bonaparte, who had been placed at the establishment of Saint-Cyr. My mother undertook the task of visiting her occasionally, and during the long time which Marianne passed at Saint-Cyr, my mother was a kind and affectionate friend to her.

One day my mother, and some other members of my family, went on a visit to Saint-Cyr, and Bonaparte accompanied them. When Marianne came into the parlour she appeared very melancholy, and at the first word that was addressed to her she burst into tears. My mother embraced her, and endeavoured to console her. It was some time before Marianne would tell the cause of her distress. At length my mother learned that one of the young ladies —Mademoiselle de Montluc—was to leave the school in a week, and that the pupils of her class intended giving her a little entertainment on her departure. Every one had contributed, but Marianne could not give anything, because her allowance of money was nearly

exhausted: she had only six francs remaining. "If I give the six francs," said she, "I shall have nothing left, and I shall not receive my allowance for six weeks to come: besides, six francs are not enough." Napoleon's first movement, as my mother told me when she related this anecdote, was to put his hand into his pocket. However, a moment's reflection assured him that he should find nothing there; he checked himself, coloured slightly, and stamped his foot. My mother could not refrain from laughing when she thought of the singular resemblance between the luncheon of Saint-Cyr and the breakfast at the military school of Paris, and she mentioned this in Greek to my uncle. The coincidence was easily explained; both the brother and sister were *boursiers*—free pupils—in the schools at which there were, at the same time, the children of many noble and wealthy families. Now the Bonaparte family were poor: this fact was openly acknowledged by M. Bonaparte, the father, when he wrote to the minister of war for the purpose of getting Lucien placed at Brienne. A great deal of discussion has been started on the question of the wealth or poverty of the Bonaparte family. The reproaches which have been founded on their supposed poverty are too contemptible for notice; and in my opinion it matters little what were the pecuniary circumstances of the family before they entered upon that career of greatness which the genius and fortune of Napoleon opened to them.

But we will return to Marianne. My mother asked her what money she wanted. The sum was small: ten or twelve francs. My mother gave her the money, and her distress was ended. When they got into the carriage, Napoleon, who had restrained his feelings in the presence of his sister, vented violent invectives against the detestable system of such establishments as Saint-Cyr and the military schools. It was evident that he deeply felt the humiliation of his sister. My uncle, who was of a hasty temper, soon got out of patience at the bitterness with which he expressed himself, and made some observations which were not very agreeable to him. Napoleon was silent immediately, for at that time young people were educated in the observance of great respect to those who were older than themselves; but his heart was full: he soon brought back the conversation to the same subject, and, at length, his language became so violent that my uncle exclaimed, "Silence! it ill becomes you, who are educated by the king's bounty, to speak as you do." I have often heard my mother say that she thought Napoleon would have been stifled with rage. He was pale and red in the space of a moment. "I am not educated at the king's expense," said he, "but

at the expense of the state." "A fine distinction, truly!" returned my uncle. "Is not the king the state? I will not suffer you to speak thus disrespectfully of your benefactor in my presence." "I will say nothing that may be displeasing to you, sir," replied the young man; "only give me leave to add that *if I were the sovereign* and had power to alter these regulations, I would change them so that they should be for the advantage of all."

I need not point the reader's attention to the remarkable words, *if I were the sovereign.* When he really did become a sovereign, it was well known on what an admirable footing he established his military schools. I am convinced that he long retained the recollection of the painful humiliations he had suffered at the military school of Paris. He certainly was no favourite there. Several of the heads of the establishment, who were acquainted with my father, assured him that young Napoleon Bonaparte possessed a temper which there was no possibility of rendering even sociable. He was dissatisfied with every thing, and expressed his dissatisfaction in a way which could not but be disagreeable to his elders, who regarded him as an ill-tempered, wrong-headed youth. His conduct accelerated his departure from the college: his removal was unanimously urged.* He obtained a sub-lieutenancy in a regiment of artillery, and he went to Grenoble, Valence, Auxonne, &c., before he returned to Paris.

Previously to his departure he came to pass some time at our house. My sister was then at her convent, but she frequently came home while Napoleon was with us. I well recollect that, on the day when he first put on his uniform, he was as vain as young men usually are on such an occasion. There was one part of his dress which had a very droll appearance—that was his boots. They were so high and wide that his little thin legs seemed buried in their amplitude. Young people are always ready to observe any thing ridiculous; and as soon as my sister and I saw Napoleon enter the drawing-room, we burst into a loud fit of laughter. At that early age, as well as in after-life, Bonaparte could not relish a joke; and when he found himself the object of merriment, he grew angry. My sister, who was some years older than I, told him, that since he wore a sword, he ought to be gallant to ladies; and instead of being angry, should be happy that they joked with him. "You are nothing but a child—a little *pensionnaire*," said Napoleon, in a tone of contempt. Cecile, who was twelve or thirteen years of age, was highly indignant at being called a child, and she hastily resented the affront, by replying to Bo-

* That is to say, by getting him entered in a regiment. There was no idea of removal in any other way.

naparte, "And you are nothing but a *puss in boots.*" This excited a general laugh among all present except Napoleon, whose rage I will not attempt to describe. Though not much accustomed to society, he had too much tact not to perceive that he ought to be silent when personalities were introduced, and his adversary was a woman.

Though deeply mortified at the unfortunate nickname which my sister had given him, yet he affected to forget it; and to prove that he cherished no malice on the subject, he got a little toy made and gave it as a present to me. This toy consisted of a cat in boots, in the character of a footman running before the carriage of the Marquis de Carabas. It was very well made, and must have been rather expensive to him, considering his straightened finances. He brought along with it a pretty little edition of the popular tale of Puss in Boots, which he presented to my sister, begging her to keep it as *a token of his remembrance.* "Oh, Napoleon," said my mother, "if you had merely given the toy to Loulou it would have been all very well; but the tale for Cecile shows that you are still offended with her." He gave his word to the contrary; but I think with my mother that some little feeling of resentment was still rankling in his mind. This story would probably have vanished from my recollection had I not heard it often told by my mother and brother. My recollection of it was afterwards useful to me in a curious way.

When Bonaparte indulged in raillery he did not use the weapon with a very light hand; and those he loved best often smarted under the blow. Though Junot was a particular favourite of his during the consulate and the first years of the empire, yet he frequently selected him as the object of some coarse joke; and if accompanied by a pinch of the ear, so severe as to draw blood, the favour was complete. Junot, who cherished for him a sentiment of attachment which set every other consideration at naught, used to laugh heartily at these jokes, and then thought no more about them. However, it sometimes occurred, that those by whom they had been heard thought proper to repeat them; and it happened that on one occasion this was very annoying to me. One day, when we were at Malmaison, the first consul was in high spirits. We were dining under the trees which crown the little eminence on the left of the meadow before the castle. Madame Bonaparte that day wore powder for the first time. It became her very well, but the first consul did nothing but laugh at her, and said she would do admirably to act the *Countess d'Escarbagnas.* Josephine was evidently displeased at this, and Bonaparte added, "What, are you afraid you will not have a cavalier? There is the Marquis de Carabas (pointing to Junot), he will offer you his arm, I am sure."

The first consul had often before, called both Junot and Marmont the Marquis de Carabas; but it was always in perfect good humour. It was, he said, on account of their taste for dramatic representation. They of course merely laughed at the joke. Madame Bonaparte, however, took it more seriously, and betrayed symptoms of vexation. This was not the way to please Bonaparte. He took his glass in his hand, and looking towards his wife, he bowed his head and said, "To the health of Madame la Comtesse d'Escarbagnas." The continuance of this pleasantry brought tears into Madame Bonaparte's eyes. Napoleon observed this, and he was, I believe, sorry for what he had said. To make amends, he again took up his glass, and winking at me, he said, "To the health of Madame la Marquise de Carabas." We all burst into a fit of laughter, in which Madame Bonaparte joined, but her heart was nevertheless full. The fact is, I was only sixteen, and she was forty.

Thus far the affair did not much concern me; but now for the sequel. Among the comrades of Junot, and those who surrounded the first consul, there were many varieties of character. Courage was, to be sure, a virtue common to them all; but among these valiant sons of France, there were many who were not gifted with much common sense. One of these took it into his head to repeat the first consul's joke about the *Marquis de Carabas*. His folly might have reached the ears of Junot and have turned to something more serious than a joke. I wished to put a stop to it, and I consulted my mother as to what I should do. She gave me my instructions, and I returned to Malmaison, where we were then spending a few days. On the following day, Junot, who was then commandant of Paris, was prevented coming to dinner, but he came the day after. We were all on the bridge leading to the garden, and the first consul was sitting on the edge of the parapet. "My dear," said I to Junot, "the first time we go to *your country seat*, you must not forget one thing which is indispensably necessary in your retinue. If you neglect it I will not go with you, and so I warn you. I am sure the general will say you ought to have it." "What is it?" inquired the first consul.—"A *puss in boots* for a running footman." The whole party laughed immoderately; but I shall never forget the look of the first consul. He was a subject for a caricaturist. "I have preserved," continued I with great gravity, "a plaything which was given me when I was a little girl. You shall have it for a model."

There was a great deal of laughter, but the matter went no further that day. Some days afterwards we had assembled after dinner in the gallery next to the drawing-room, and the individual who had so

frequently repeated Bonaparte's joke, made the same allusion to the *marquisate*. I fixed my eye on the first consul; he turned towards his Socia, and said drily: "When you wish to imitate me, you should choose your subject better; methinks you might copy me in better things." In about a quarter of an hour after this rebuke, he stepped up to me, and pinching my nose till he made me cry out, he said, "My dear, you are a clever girl; but you are very wicked. Correct this disposition. Remember that a woman ceases to charm whenever she makes herself feared." The result of all this was that I heard no more about the *marquisate*. My mother, who had certainly been more malicious in the affair than I had, inquired the particulars of the whole scene, and when I described it she laughed heartily and said, "I was sure that would do."

CHAPTER VI.

The parliament of 1787—Disturbances at Rennes—M. de Nousinville—M. Necker—Project of M. de Loménie—His dismissal from the ministry—Burning of the effigy—Riots in Paris—Louis XVI., the queen, and the royal family.

At the period when our family came to settle in Paris, the popularity enjoyed by the parliament was immense, and it might have made use of that popularity for the benefit and happiness of all, had it given a right direction to public feeling. France, though she contained within herself all the elements of the commotions which were soon after developed, had not as yet unfurled the flag of revolution: her wounds were sufficiently manifest, and might easily have been healed by proper remedies. We then saw what we now see, and what will always be seen, viz., views of private interest succeeding patriotic professions. The desire of shining in a lengthened harangue, stuffed with scraps of erudition, was a universal mania; while some unfortunate little village, of which the orator was perhaps the mandatory, was left undefended and uneulogized. Such was the conduct of Desprémenil, who, after having had the courage to defeat the projects of the Archbishop of Toulouse, and shown himself in that affair a true tribune of the people, subsequently appeared in the character of an illuminato, or rather of a fool, in his reply to M. de Malesherbes, on the subject of the Protestants.

Desprémenil had procured, by dint of bribery, a proof sheet of

the ministerial edicts. When he read them to the assembled chambers, the most profound indignation, and a thirst for vengeance, kindled up the fatal war between the court and the parliament. Seeing its interests wounded on all sides, that body became an enemy, and a dangerous one. The rupture became every day more and more serious. The ministry, irritated at the surreptitious promulgation of their plans, ordered the arrest of Desprémenil in the most arbitrary manner. The parliament renewed its clamours: Paris was filled with murmurs, and a most ominous fermentation prevailed every where. At this juncture M. de Brienne, who neither knew how to yield with grace, or to act with decision when the occasion required it, prorogued all the parliaments of the kingdom. This was a second appeal to insurrection, which indeed seemed too slow in its advances. My brother at that period went to join his regiment, which was then in garrison at Sainte-Brieux; but having many letters of recommendation at Rennes, he spent in that town all the time he had at his disposal, before he joined his comrades. Rennes was then in such a state of ferment and irritation, as threatened an immediate explosion. The magistracy and noblesse had united to protest in anticipation against every infringement of their rights. The noblesse indeed were most violent: they declared that all who accepted any of the new posts were scoundrels, and they conveyed this protestation by deputies who were arrested on their route by order of the ministry.

One morning my brother was awakened by a great tumult. He soon learned that Bertrand de Molleville, and the Count de Thiars,* were in the most imminent danger in consequence of endeavouring to register the edicts. He immediately dressed himself, seized his sword and pistols, and ran to the barracks of the Rhoan-Chabot regiment, which was then in garrison at Rennes. My brother had many friends there, and naturally was anxious on their account, though he was aware of their honourable sentiments. The excitement was at its height, when he arrived at the scene of action. The soldiers, irritated and insulted by the people, had lost all patience, and the business would in all probability have terminated in bloodshed, had not an individual, whose name is not sufficiently celebrated, that day immortalized himself by his admirable conduct. The people were proceeding to acts of violence; the soldiers only waited for the order to fire, when M. Blondel de Nouainville was commanded to execute the painful duty of directing an attack on the people. Throwing himself into the midst of the crowd, he exclaimed: "My friends, what is it you do? Do

* The former, the intendant—the latter, the commandant of the province.

not sacrifice yourselves! Are we not all brothers? Soldiers, halt!" The troops and the people suspended their advance; at the same instant tranquillity was restored, and M. de Nouainville was carried about the town in triumph.

My father, whom confidential relations placed in communication with M. Necker, introduced my brother to him, in order that he might hear from his mouth the recital of the affairs of Rennes. My father was decidedly of opinion that, in a province like Brittany, such a proceeding was more likely to add fuel to the flame than to extinguish it. My brother was then twenty-two years of age, and his judgment ripened by much travelling, and a solid education directed by an able father, enabled him in spite of his youth, not only to observe, but to draw useful inductions from his observations. M. Necker perceived this as he listened to his narrative, and he mentioned it to my father.

Alas! how desirable it would have been if M. Necker, who possessed a mind of such rectitude, had but listened to my father, and used his influence with the queen, who was all powerful, to arrest that fatal proceeding, which, as she said, would reduce Brittany to the condition of *a conquered province*. What torrents of French blood were shed in Brittany! and yet the revolution had not then commenced; for many date that event from the taking of the Bastile. M. de Loménie's burlesque and tragi-comic ministry was still inundating us with its errors and its follies. Although the devotion of a true citizen had stopped the effusion of blood at Rennes, Grenoble was steeped in gore. An admirable address conveyed to the foot of the throne a statement of the grievances which pressed on the people of Dauphiny. For an answer it received an insult, dictated to Louis XVI. by the delirium of an insane ministry. One false step was the parent of another, and error succeeded error without the means of providing a remedy. Finally, after trying over and over again the dangerous experiment of a *coup d'état*—after the patience of the nation was entirely exhausted, the archbishop made the fatal promise of assembling the states-general.*

The acts of men are only good and proper in relation to the time of their performance. Thus an appeal to the three bodies of the state, inviting them to rally round the throne, and to aid the sovereign in doing what was necessary to alleviate the people's misery, would have been a measure praiseworthy and useful at a period of ordinary misfortune; but at a time when animosity was excited to the highest pitch, it was at once tempting fate and defying the storm.

* The king promised they should meet on the 1st of May, 1789.

It is certain that the hopes of the Archbishop of Sens, in the distressing situation into which his imprudence and folly had thrown him, rested upon a fragile edifice of machiavelian conception, which assuredly the wily Italian would never have avowed under similar circumstances. Monsieur de Loménie's project was to embroil the two privileged orders, and reconcile them again through the medium of the king and the third state. The object of this fine plan was to destroy the influence of the first two orders. This is actually true, improbable as it may appear. What infatuation! and it was to such a man that the destinies of a great people were, for fifteen months, entrusted! Truly it is difficult to determine which is most strange, his absurdity or the people's toleration of it!

But patience must have its term. The treasury was drained; famine and bankruptcy stared us in the face; all was ruin around us! The public indignation at length overwhelmed M. de Loménie, and he retired from the ministry, pursued by the execrations of all parties. On the day that terminated his administration, some young men prepared an effigy, the size of life, and dressed like the archbishop in a velvet-coloured robe, in which three-fifths were composed of satin, and the two others of paper, by way of allusion to the decree of the 16th of August preceding. This effigy they burned with all due ceremony in the Place Dauphine, with every demonstration of extravagant exultation. There was at this time in Paris a Chevalier Dubois, who commanded the guard called the *guet*, or patrole. This *guet* was the gendarmerie of the time. The burning of the effigy displeased M. Dubois; and the next day, when an attempt was made to renew the ceremony, he presented himself in person to forbid it. The young men desired him to go about his business; he refused, and some altercation arose. He then desired his troop to employ their arms, and they did so without mercy. At sight of the killed and wounded the people became furious: they attacked and drove away the *guet;* several guard-houses were forced, and the arms seized. The riot continued to increase. It was now night. A detachment of the French guards, concealed under the arcade of Saint-Jean, and in the Rue Martrois, fired on the crowd, and killed a great number. The dead bodies were thrown into the Seine, and tranquillity was for a time restored. But, on the resignation of the keeper of the seals, who was as much disliked as the Archbishop of Toulouse, the discontent of the people again broke out. Great rioting ensued in the streets of Paris, and numbers of people were killed by the military.

M. Necker was called to the head of the department of finance, and affairs took a favourable aspect. The finances of the country improved

by confidence, the prisoners were released from the Bastile, and the parliament recalled. The double representation of the third state was the wish of every just and reasonable man. It was found necessary to adopt it; and, on the 27th of December, 1788, at a royal council at which the queen was present, it was determined to grant the double representation. This measure produced enthusiastic joy throughout all France, the demonstration of which was attended by considerable disturbance at Montmartre, Rennes, and other towns in that part of the country. It seemed indeed as if the whole of France was included in the provinces of Dauphiny, Brittany, and the Franche-Comté. Hence it was that the people constantly insisted on the revival of their old rights and prerogatives; hence those perpetual contests between the states, the parliaments, and the king's council. For example, in Franche-Comté, thirty-two members of the noblesse protested against the decree of the majority of the states. The parliament cancelled the protest, and the king's council, in its turn, cancelled the decree of the parliament. The fact is, Louis XVI. might have been competent to govern in ordinary times; his virtues might have shed lustre over a peaceful throne; but the storm could only be allayed by a degree of courage and decision in which he was wanting. The king had near him a perfidious enemy in his privy council. The queen, too, exercised great influence over him, and was a most dangerous guide; she was passionate, full of prejudices, and ready to make any sacrifice to revenge herself when her private interests were wounded. But her misfortunes, and those of the king, must throw a veil over their faults.

As to the other members of the royal family, they were so divided that they could afford no rallying point. The king's aunts, one of whom had previously possessed great influence over the royal couple, had been superseded by other favourites. Madame Victoire had no power; and as to the pious Madame Elizabeth, she conceived she had no other duty to perform than to offer up prayers for the safety of those about her. Monsieur had set up a sort of opposition, which in France was infinitely more dangerous than it would have been in England, where it seems to be quite orthodox that the heir to the throne should head an opposition. Monsieur, however, did his brothers great injury, without perhaps intending it,* and the conduct of

* Among his most serious faults may be ranked the assumption of the title of regent, in 1791. Louis XVI. felt this keenly, and immediately wrote to Vienna to Baron Breteuil, desiring him to disavow, not only to the Emperor of Austria, but to all the other Powers, the authorized existence of the regency. "This proceeding," said the unfortunate monarch in his letter, "may be fatal to me, as it will only serve to irritate my people against me. I am master of

Madame was even more mischievous. As to the Count d'Artois, he might have been null, though standing on the steps of the throne, had he not considered it a point of honour to disavow any other law than the old authority of the crown. Such was the situation of France and the royal family in 1789, just before the opening of the States-general.

CHAPTER VII.

Opening of the states—General conversation between Bonaparte and Count Louis de Narbonne—Baron de Breteuil—The Queen and M. de Vergennes—Mirabeau—Advances made by the court—A bribe refused—The Queen's anger—Mirabeau solicits an interview with the Queen—Errors of M. Necker's administration.

On the 5th of May, 1789, the States-general were opened.* I was then too young to understand the solemnity of the spectacle presented by the states, when they proceeded to the church of St. Louis at Versailles, to hear mass on the day preceding their sitting; but I well recollect the immense and joyful crowd which thronged the three avenues, and lined the road along which the deputies passed. The States commenced their labours. Had union prevailed throughout all the parts of the great whole, that admirable work would have been brought to a favourable issue. Unfortunately, there was not only a want of union, but there was no wish to establish it. The third state grew tired of not being heard, or rather of receiving, by way of answer, demands made by the clergy and nobility, in a tone of authority ill suited to prevailing circumstances. At length came the separation of the third state from the two privileged orders: this was the finishing stroke; the grand conquest between the throne and the nation was now about to be decided. The retreat of the third estate into the tennis court produced an effect which years would not have brought about. The deputies, by declaring themselves to be the representatives of a great nation, acquired new power: the people began to

my actions." The queen added a few lines to this letter. The Baron de Breteuil showed it to several individuals with whom I am acquainted; among others to the Abbé Junot and Cardinal Maury.

* It is a curious coincidence that Napoleon died at St. Helena on the 5th of May.

measure their strength, and they found that they might venture very far in attempting the great work of their deliverance.

One of the causes which contributed to overthrow the throne of France, at this disastrous period, was occult government. Napoleon, when one day conversing about the revolution with Count Louis de Narbonne, said: "But you had great influence, had you not?" M. de Narbonne observed that nothing could be more unfounded than that supposition. His constitutional opinions with held him alike from advocating or opposing the revolution. M. de Narbonne added, that it was the queen herself who insisted on the double representation of the royal authority, though without any hostile feeling towards France, which she loved and regarded as her adopted country. Many absurdities have been advanced on this subject: for example, what could be more ridiculous than to suppose the queen to have been more attached to her brother than to her husband, her children, and her crown? "I believe, however," said M. de Narbonne, "that in 1792, the queen was so irritated by all she had suffered for three years previously, that her love for France was very much diminished." As to the occult government, the Baron de Breteuil is the individual who is most to be reproached on that score. While he declared it to be his wish to establish the English constitution in France, he would have introduced the constitution of Constantinople, if there had been such a thing. That man did a great deal of mischief in France, with his loud voice and narrow ideas.

My mother described to me the enthusiastic admiration with which the queen was received on one occasion when she appeared at the opera soon after her marriage. The performance was *Iphigénie en Aulide*. The queen arrived very late, and the fine chorus *Chantons, célébrons notre reine*, had just been sung. As soon as the queen entered, the repetition of the chorus was unanimously called for, and it was sung by the whole audience with such affectionate ardour, that the queen melted into tears. Alas! unfortunate princess, how soon was this love changed to hatred! The following is one of the many circumstances which combined to effect that change. While M. de Vergennes was in the department of foreign affairs, he was one day summoned by the queen on some very singular business. The queen's brother, the Emperor, had requested her to obtain a loan of twelve millions for him. Of course, it was understood that the money was to be repaid, but in the public ferment which then existed, it was necessary that both the loan and the repayment should be kept a profound secret. The matter was very difficult; for on the queen's own acknowledgment, the king was decidedly opposed to it. The queen

informed M. de Vergennes that she wished him to devise some means of raising the money, and above all of inducing the king to consent to it. "With all the respect I entertain for your majesty," replied the minister, "I am unfortunately obliged to disobey your commands. The state treasury is empty; we are approaching a terrible crisis, and I should consider myself very culpable were I, by my advice, to urge the king to a step which cannot but be fatal to your majesties and to France."—"Sir," said the queen, haughtily, "I sent for you to request your intercession, not to ask for advice. But I shall, without your aid, prevail on the king to do what will strengthen the links of friendship between France and Austria. I shall merely trouble you to procure the funds; and I will, if necessary, be the security. The queen of France may love her adopted country without forgetting that she is an Austrian archduchess. I want no new taxes. I do not even wish that the department of finance should be applied to in this affair; but a loan may be raised, and let it be done."

M. de Vergennes returned home much disconcerted. The queen's determination seemed to be positive, and the minister plainly saw that the king would yield to the entreaties of the woman he loved. That very evening the king sent for him, and informed him, with an embarrassed air, of the promise which the queen had extorted from him, and expressed his wish that the sum, or at least half of it, should be raised. It was not easy at that time to raise money for the government, and great address was requisite to attain that object. There was in Paris an immensely rich banker named Durhuet. He was commissioned by M. de Vergennes to raise the loan. After a great deal of trouble, and one or two journeys, he at length succeeded. The courier who was to convey to Vienna the intelligence that the king had given his consent to a loan of twelve millions, when France wanted bread, was ready to start. M. de Vergennes delivered to him his dispatches with secret instructions. The courier set out; but when he had got about twenty leagues from Paris, he was suddenly taken ill, and was obliged to suspend his journey for forty-eight hours. This interval was well employed by the minister. He threw himself at the king's feet, and so earnestly implored him to consider that the step he was about to take would be attended by fatal consequences, that Louis XVI. consented to the recall of the courier. The money was restored to M. Durhuet, and the king's refusal was sent to Vienna instead of the loan.

After the separation of the third state from the two privileged orders, but few means of reconciliation really remained, though at first there appeared many, and among them was the acquisition of Mirabeau.

This astonishing man was without doubt the greatest political character of our revolution. His portrait has been drawn in every attitude, under all possible lights; and yet they have but little understood this wonderful orator, who think they have said enough when they echo the expressions, "What inimitable talent! he was surely inspired! but then the immorality of his writings!" and such like. I am indeed far from wishing to represent Mirabeau as an estimable character; but the brilliancy of that colossal talent with which nature had gifted him still remains to elicit admiration, and make us overlook, by the contrast, the shades which darken so splendid a picture. It would be the height of absurdity in me to lay a tint upon the portrait of Mirabeau, which would in any degree diminish its truth to nature. I merely contend that, in speaking of him, we ought not to take for granted all the errors which have been laid to his charge. It matters little to us that the old magisterial peruke of the President Le Monier was compromised in the tribunals. What business have we with the matrimonial squabbles of M. and Mme. de Mirabeau?

I cannot class Mirabeau with the rest of the men who figured in the Revolution. I flatter myself I knew more of his real character than those who were acquainted with him at the epoch of his brilliant existence. The fact is, that I was in the habit of seeing regularly, almost every day, for at least seven years of my early life, the two individuals who were best able to give me an accurate opinion of Mirabeau. The first was his dearest friend, the man he cherished above all others, and who in return almost worshipped his memory. This man, who followed the political path of Mirabeau, and who by means of his intimacy with him, and subsequently with Dumouriez, obtained a sort of influence in the government, was Bonnecarère. He lived at Versailles at the time I resided there. The other individual was Cardinal Maury, who, when only an abbé, was the opponent of Mirabeau, by whom, however, he was constantly defeated. From the sentiments of these two men, and likewise from some documents which have been placed at my disposal, I have drawn my inferences. I have formed an opinion which is, I trust, divested of all prejudice. Excluded from the rank to which his birth entitled him, Mirabeau determined to recover it at any price. He vowed vengeance against his enemies, and with this bitterness of feeling did Mirabeau take his seat in the assembly of the states-general. As he entered the hall, on the day of opening, he cast a threatening glance on the ranks which he was not allowed to approach. A bitter smile played on his lips, which were habitually contracted by an ironical and scornful expression. He proceeded across the hall, and seated himself upon those benches

from which he was soon to hurl the thunderbolts which shook the throne.

A gentleman, strongly attached to the court, but likewise a friend of Mirabeau, the Count de Reb——, who had observed the rancorous look which he darted around him when he took his seat, entered into conversation with him the same day, and pointed out to him that his peculiar position in the world closed against him the door of every saloon in Paris. "Consider," said the count, "that society when once wounded is not easily conciliated. If you wish to be pardoned, you must ask pardon." Mirabeau listened with impatience to what the count said, but when he used the word "pardon," he could contain himself no longer, but started up and stamped with violence on the ground. His bushy hair seemed to stand on end, his little piercing eyes flashed fire, and his lips turned pale and quivered. This was always the way with Mirabeau when he was strongly excited. "I am come hither," cried he in a voice of thunder, "to be asked, not to ask for pardon." These words were reported that very evening to the queen. Her majesty used to note in her memorandum book those deputies whose talents were worthy her notice. We may conclude that Mirabeau stood at the top of her red ink list.

That Mirabeau was corruptible, all the world knows. To manage a negotiation with him was, however, a difficult and delicate task. Nevertheless, intrigue and cunning afforded hopes of success at a moment when fears and misgivings were becoming more and more acute and deeply seated.

On the 7th of May, 1789, the queen was informed of Mirabeau's hostile intentions.* M. Necker was consulted, and his opinion was, that Mirabeau was possessed of extraordinary talent, but wanted judgment; and M. Necker considered him not very formidable. But M. Necker ought to have known enough of our nation to be aware what might be produced by brilliant oratory and an eloquence teeming with facts. Now, the cause that Mirabeau had undertaken to defend was in itself the most just of all causes, and that M. Necker knew better than most people. He, however, declined to have any thing to do with the negotiation, and merely yielded to the queen's wish to place at her disposal a sum of money to assist the execution of her designs.

Furnished with his instructions, and a well stocked purse, the Count de Reb—— went one morning to Mirabeau, plied him with

* That is to say, that it was known *by his own avowal*, what he intended to do, and what he required for pursuing a directly contrary line of conduct. The documents relating to this affair *have been in my hands*, and are still in existence.

much art, and finally made him offers which he felt confident he would not hesitate to accept. But fate ordained that the man who had always been needy, and tormented by creditors, was at that moment well supplied with money. What was the result? He rejected the proposition of Count de Réb——l's offers, and asked him for whom he took him? Mirabeau dismissed the count with all the dignity of an ancient Greek, telling him that offers of money could not be listened to by him. The count, though chagrined at his disappointment, did not lose hope. He knew Mirabeau well enough, and was sure he would not remain long in his present frame of mind.

That same evening a man who served Mirabeau in the capacity of a *pacolet* called upon the count. This man, as Joulevet, was a kind of factotum to the tribune of the people. He had been implicated in the trial of Madame Lemonnier, and since that period had served, though distantly, his dangerous patron, whom he loved. He was a practised intriguer, and had been attracted to Paris by the assembling of the states-general, reasonably presuming that there his talents would find occupation. He waited on his old patron, and through the medium of M. de Bonnecarère, of whom I had these facts, was introduced to Mirabeau. Mirabeau found him of use, and obscure as this man was, he was of singular assistance to Mirabeau. Of this I have seen written proofs.

Joulevet opened the conference with the Count de Réb——, by announcing to him that Mirabeau consented to place all his influence at the disposal of the court, but required, he said, an honourable treaty, and not a paltry bargain:* that he did not wish to supersede M. Necker, whose talents he respected (this by the way is not true, for Mirabeau made him the constant butt of his raillery†), but that any other department of the ministry would suit him. On these terms he would devote himself to the court. The Count de Réb——l, who was a good simple man, thought, on hearing this, that ambition had wrought this change in Mirabeau. He went to him, and was this time well received, and heard all the reasons he gave for his readiness to *sacrifice*

* My memory is rather in doubt, with regard to the amount of the sum stipulated. I think 100,000 fr.; but I am not certain. I have likewise forgotten whether or no this sum was part of the personal property of M. Necker. But M. Necker's honourable character would lead to that inference.

† Since writing the above, I have seen a work of Madame de Staël, in which she states that Mirabeau had a high opinion of M. Necker. In this she is certainly deceived. I know that Mirabeau used among his intimate friends to call him a fool, and a political Cassandra. Madame de Staël's conduct is very excusable; but her filiar affection sometimes carries her too far.

himself by entering the ministry at such a moment. The same day the count saw the individual who was to speak to the queen, and he on the first intelligence of the capitulation of Mirabeau (for he was really a strong hold), ran immediately to acquaint the queen with the happy news. The count followed, and when he entered the queen's cabinet, her majesty advanced towards him, her countenance beaming with pleasure. "The king will be gratified by your zeal, monsieur," said she to the plenipotentiary. "Well! had you a good bargain of this man? How much has he cost?" The Count de Réb——l then said that Mirabeau, with true magnanimity, had rejected all propositions of a pecuniary nature. He then mentioned the appointment to the ministry.

At the mention of this the queen reddened, and then turned deadly pale. She closed her eyes, and striking her forehead with her hand, exclaimed: "A minister! Make *Requetti Mirabeau* a minister! Never! never will I allow the threshold of the king's council to be sullied by the footsteps of such a man." She trembled with rage. "Let him have money! Give him all he asks for! But to make him a minister!—Is it possible that my friends can give me this advice?" She then paced the room with every mark of violent agitation, repeating the words, "A minister, forsooth! a minister!" The sequel of the story is curious. The sum offered to Mirabeau might be regarded as considerable at a period when money, being distributed about in every direction, was not very abundant at Versailles. After Mirabeau had refused it three times, the queen desired the individual employed in the negotiation to return it. This individual departed for Germany, and after he was gone Mirabeau became pressed for money, and did not know how to raise it. He had missed the opportunity, and the channel of communication was gone. When that individual returned it was too late: Mirabeau was fairly in the list: he had thrown down the gauntlet, and now wanted both *money* and *office*. It is curious that Mirabeau earnestly solicited an interview with the queen. But the queen would consent to it only on condition that it should be in the presence of M. de Réb——l, or Monsieur. Mirabeau, however, would not accede to that condition. What could be Mirabeau's object in so urgently pressing this interview? Did he not believe the truth of the story of the necklace? Did he found any hopes on the powers of captivation with which nature had endowed him, in spite of his personal disadvantages?

It is not surprising that Mirabeau should have maintained profound silence on the whole of this affair. It was a point of the utmost importance that members of the states-general should preserve, in the

opinions of the citizens, a character for purity, independence, and disinterestedness. All and each of the deputies pledged themselves on their honour not to solicit or accept any pension or favour directly or indirectly. These considerations rendered Mirabeau circumspect, and whatever might be his habitual imprudence, he betrayed no levity in this affair, the details of which were not known till some years afterwards.

CHAPTER VIII.

Louis XVI. at the Hôtel de Ville on the 14th of July—Revolutionary scenes—Departure of my father and brother for England—My father's return—His duel with M. de Som—le—Return of my brother—Domiciliary visit to my father's house—Napoleon's remarks upon it—The 10th of August—We save two of our friends—M. de Condorcet—My father denounced—Departure of my father and mother from Paris—My sister and I placed at boarding-school.

When, after the 14th of July, the king was conducted to the Hôtel de Ville to sanction the revolution which had been made against himself, my father informed me that his deep distress and calm dignified deportment inspired respect from all who surrounded him. The king had long seen the storm gathering in the horizon; it had now burst upon his head. The danger was present and full before him. My father said that the pious expression of the king's countenance showed how he viewed his situation. He judged it as a christian, if he did not judge it as a king. Before the revolution of the 14th of July, M. Necker had been dismissed. He was recalled after that event. From this indecision it was clear that the ship had no pilot. At this period a report which had long been circulated assumed a semblance of truth. The Duke of Orleans had been accused of being the head of a party, and the newspapers of the day employed his name in the hints which they daily set forth that France should follow the example of England. The Duke of Orleans was fixed upon, because, in the English revolution, the direct part of the royal family had been expelled in favour of the Prince of Orange. The thing was so often repeated, that the Duke of Orleans began at last to believe that he might place himself at the head of a party, and become the leader of a faction, without the qualification for such an office.

Robespierre and others set the Duke of Orleans forward, because they wanted something that would please the moderate and reasonable

party. That party allowed itself to be caught in the snare. But this stone, which it was intended to hurl on the royal head, could not roll of itself. It was only dangerous from the hands which were to move it. I recollect, as though they were terrible dreams, the 14th of July, the 6th of October, the 21st of June, and several other days which formed the most fatal in the calendar. On the 6th of October, in particular, I remember seeing my mother, at three in the afternoon, ordering the servants to shut the drawing-room shutters which looked on the quay. My father wished to go to Versailles; but she wept and held him by the arm, entreating him not to leave us. My father, alarmed at the aspect of affairs, which was every day becoming more threatening, converted his property into English stock, and set off with my brother to London. There he remained for some weeks, and then returned to France, leaving my brother in England to await his further instructions.

Many events occurred in our family during the absence of my brother. My father's constitutional principles were well known, and yet his attachment to the king led him into several disputes. He fought a duel with M. de Som—le, an officer in my brother's regiment, who, in my father's presence, made some remarks on the opinions of Albert. M. de Som—le was slightly wounded in the arm, but my father escaped unhurt.

At that period a family who kept many servants could not be sure of them all. My father took all possible precautions. The duel was not known, it is true; but the quarrel which gave rise to it was repeated about with various commentaries. This was attended by dangerous consequences. In the preceding year, a man, who said he was an upholsterer, established himself in a little shop in the neighbourhood of the Mint. He came to request my mother's custom; but he was informed that she had already an upholsterer whom she was not inclined to discard for a stranger. He was insolent, and a dispute arose between him and the servant. The noise drew my father to the door, and the result was that M. Thirion was turned out of the house. My father, and the rest of the family, thought no more about this affair, but Thirion remembered it, and he vowed deadly hatred against us.

The sections were formed. This man acquired some influence in ours. He became secretary, clerk, or I know not what. A few days after my father's return from England, a domiciliary visit was made to our house. It was under the direction of Thirion, who had probably instigated it. My father had just risen and was shaving, when, to his surprise, Thirion entered his dressing room, and informed him that he had come to inquire his age, his qualifications, and the object of his

recent journey. My father insisted on seeing the order, and Thirion refused to show it. My father flew into a violent rage, and seizing on a large stick would probably have insisted on inflicting a severe chastisement on Thirion, but for my mother's intercession; Thirion took his departure, after declaring that he should make a report against my father. In the midst of the agitation into which this scene threw my mother and me, Napoleon Bonaparte happened to call. On being informed of what had taken place, he expressed great indignation, and immediately repaired to the section, the club, the committee, or whatever might be the authority which at that time ordered domiciliary visits. Thirion had already made his report; but Napoleon, nevertheless, animadverted strongly on Thirion's refusal to produce his order. "If," said he, "M. de Permon had fired a pistol at that man, he would only have been defending his house against an insolent intruder, and no one could have blamed him."

This happened on the 7th or 8th of August. The 10th was a day which I shall never forget. It was the day of my fête, and hitherto I had always spent it happily. Some of my young friends had been invited to visit me, and my little chamber was filled with flowers, toys, and sweetmeats. But our festival day proved a day of mourning. In the streets the cries of the people mingled with the thundering of artillery and the groans of the wounded. About noon my brother entered with one of his companions in arms, who was wrapped in a great coat. The young man had tasted nothing for forty hours, and he had just escaped from the pursuit of those who would have massacred him if they had found him. His family lay under great obligations to the queen. His duty and his opinions happened to coincide. In the course of a few days he had fought three duels, two of which had terminated fatally. One of his deceased adversaries was a relation of Manuel; consequently there was every thing to fear. The young gentleman was concealed in my little apartment, and I received instructions as to the answers I should give in case of the house being searched. The cautious prudence I had then to observe in behalf of a stranger, afterwards became useful to me when those I most dearly loved were in similar danger.

My father was out, and my mother had anxiously expected his return for several hours. My brother went frequently to the gate to look for him. He even ventured as far as the quay, where he heard of the deposition of the king, but could see nothing of my father. The storm seemed to be subsiding, but the firing of musketry was still heard at intervals. Night was drawing in, and my father had not yet returned. My brother again went down to the gate to look for him,

We received a letter from my mother, dated Toulouse. She and my father had fixed their temporary abode in that city, and they desired us to join them. We accordingly left Paris for that purpose. We lodged in the house of M. de Montauriol, president of the parliament of Toulouse. It was situated in the finest part of the town, and was divided between four families. We were no sooner established in our new abode, than my father was summoned to appear before the president of the section, or district. My father was in such a state of irritability that my mother would not suffer him to go, and my brother went in his stead.

It was some time before my brother could make the worthy magistrate comprehend that the citizen Permon he saw before him was not citizen Permon *the elder*, and that the latter was too ill to attend. When at length this was explained to him, after considerable difficulty, he exclaimed, "And what do you do here? coward! aristocrat! why are you not with the army?" My brother replied that he was not with the army because his father, being ill, his mother and sisters required his protection. However, this explanation was not considered satisfactory, and my brother narrowly escaped being arrested on the spot. When he returned home he was in great distress and alarm. He consulted my mother on the means of securing my father's safety; and she, with the admirable spirit and presence of mind which never forsook her, determined to write to her countryman Salicetti, who was then in Paris, awaiting the king's trial.

My father had been intimately acquainted with M. Durosoi, who edited a journal entitled "*l'Ami du Roi.*"* M. Durosoi, who was

Louisa, Princess of Savoy. *Q.* Your quality?—*A.* Superintendent of the queen's household. *Q.* Had you any knowledge of the plots of the court on the 10th of August?—*A.* I do not know that there were any plots on the 10th of August; but this I know, that I had no knowledge of them. *Q.* Will you swear to liberty, equality, and a detestation of the king, the queen, and royalty?—*A.* I shall readily swear to the two first, but I cannot swear to the last, as I have no such sentiment in my heart. A bystander whispered, "*If you do not swear, you are a dead woman.*" She was led into a court of the prison already strewed with dead bodies, where, on receiving the blow of a dagger, she fell, fainting with the loss of blood; and soon afterwards her body was pierced with a lance, and her noble spirit fled. We dare not relate all the horrors and indignities that were heaped on her. Her head was cut off, and carried through Paris to the Palais Royal, and exposed beneath the window of the Duke of Orleans, who gazed on it for a while without uttering a syllable. He was charged with being privy to this murder by the double thirst of revenge and interest; for, by her death, he gained her jointure of a hundred thousand crowns, which she received out of the fortune of the Duchess of Orleans, who was her sister-in-law.

* "L Ami du Roi" (the King's Friend) was written by Counsellor Montjoie,

firmly wedded to his own opinions, happened to meet Salicetti one day in my father's house, and a warm discussion arose between them; my father supporting the arguments of Durosoi, and my mother those of Salicetti. The latter left the house much out of humour, and the course of events obliged my mother and father to quit Paris before they had an opportunity of seeing him again. My mother feared that he might bear in mind the part my father had taken in the discussion above mentioned; and this fear was not so unfounded as it may appear. My father's opinions might be expected to influence his conduct as well as his language; and this reflection would naturally occur to the man who was asked to be a sort of security for him. My mother felt this difficulty, but she nevertheless determined to write. The letter was that of a wife and a mother. She appealed to his past friendship, to the remembrance of their common country; and concluded by assuring Salicetti that she should owe to him the lives of her husband and her children.

The danger was no doubt great, but, perhaps, not so great as my mother's fears led her to imagine, at least as far as regarded my father. My brother was really in much greater danger; for he was required to join the army, and to do that would have been to march to certain death, for the fatigues he had already undergone had brought on a pulmonary inflammation. By the next courier, Salicetti returned an exceedingly kind answer to my mother's letter. After thanking her for giving him an opportunity to serve her, he informed her that he had placed her husband under the immediate protection of the authorities of Toulouse. As to my brother, he appointed him his secretary, and sent him his nomination, together with leave to spend three months with his family.

My brother accepted the offer of Salicetti, though without the knowledge of my father, whose feelings were at that time so deeply wounded, that we did not think it advisable to add to his distress by requiring him to consent to such a step. In a very grateful letter, my brother informed Salicetti that he should join him in the month of March following. He was then twenty-four years of age.

Meanwhile the king's fate was decided. This was a severe stroke

the author of a valuable history of the revolution. The unfortunate M. de Rosoi was the editor of the Gazette de Paris. These writers, and many others, who were ardent in the cause of royalty, and editors of papers, were all imprisoned, the papers were suppressed, and the printing presses destroyed. It was on the 25th of August, 1792, that M. de Rosoi was ordered for execution. Many very interesting particulars preceding the death of this able and zealous royalist, are to be found in the narrative written by Captain St. Meard.

details by an eye-witness perfectly competent by his intelligence and information to observe all that was passing. These details are as follows:—

In the spring of 1793, Bonaparte, before he went to Toulon, having obtained leave of absence made a visit to Corsica. After his arrival at Ajaccio he lodged near the seaport in the house of an old lady, the Countess Rossi, a friend of his family. A club was formed in a barrack situated without the city, in what is called the Sea-square. In this club several orators distinguished themselves, and Napoleon Bonaparte was a frequent speaker.

Some of the inhabitants at Ajaccio, alarmed at the formidable aspect of this club, established another assembly which was attended by several persons of my acquaintance—among others by a naval officer, whose ship was lying in the roads of Corsica, and who by his talent and courage was very capable of counteracting the measures of the first mentioned club, should they have become dangerous. This assembly was held in a large house on the opposite side of the square. Its object was to maintain tranquillity, and prevent disorder. The club, of which Bonaparte was a member, at length became so threatening to the public tranquillity, that the moderate assembly resolved to send a deputation to it to point out the mischief it was likely to occasion to the country.

The naval officer, to whom I have above alluded, was at the head of this deputation, which consisted of himself and three other members of the assembly. They advised the club to be peaceable, above all, to wait for the decision of France, and to follow the movement of the republican government. Bonaparte immediately mounted the tribune, and delivered a vehement speech, the object of which was to show that in times of revolution people must be either friends or enemies, that Solon punished with death every man who remained neutral in civil discord, and that the moderates ought, therefore, to be considered enemies by true patriots. When the sitting was at an end Napoleon went out into the square. He was very much heated, and seemed but little disposed to any thing conciliating. However his violence did not intimidate my friend who was at the head of the deputation. He reproached him for what he had said in the tribune. "Bah!" said Bonaparte, "a mere club speech, nothing else. But, my friend, do you not see the necessity of firmness, and of choosing a wide road instead of a narrow path."—"You," replied my friend, "will, perhaps, lose yourself in the road you have chosen; and in the name of friendship I conjure you to alter your course." Bonaparte frowned, turned on his heel, and went off to join some of his turbulent colleagues.

Some days afterwards my friend learned from some of his correspondents in the interior of the island, that four thousand peasants intended to make a descent from the mountains, and that their hostility would be particularly directed against the families of Salicetti and Bonaparte. My friend warned Bonaparte of the danger. Napoleon wished to know whence my friend had obtained the information. He was exceedingly angry because my friend would not tell him. At length he said, "No matter, I fear no one." He parted from him very coolly. Early next morning my friend's gondolier came to inform him that he had just seen Bonaparte in the disguise of a sailor stepping into a gondola for the purpose of proceeding to Calvi. My friend immediately went out to ascertain the truth of this statement, which was corroborated by all the sailors of the port. On inquiring what had become of the Bonaparte family, he was informed they had taken refuge at Cargesa.

At the time when these circumstances occurred, Bonaparte had just received his commission of captain of artillery. Shortly after he was sent to Toulon to command the works of the siege. About this period of his life, Bonaparte was very intimate with Robespierre, the younger, with whom Junot was also well acquainted. Young Robespierre was what might be called an agreeable young man, animated by no bad sentiments, and believing, or feigning to believe, that his brother was led on by a parcel of wretches, every one of whom he would banish to Cayenne if he were in his place. On his arrival at Toulon, Bonaparte had the reputation of being a warm patriot. Junot has frequently told me that the general-in-chief, who was very moderate, at first entertained a sort of prejudice against the young officer, whose opinion he seemed to regard as much too violent.

The mission given to Bonaparte by the representative Ricord, on the 25th Messidor, year II., was rather diplomatic than military. In short, it was an order for supervision and inquisition. He was especially instructed to keep a watchful eye upon the French minister and chargé-d'affaires at Genoa. It is, therefore, evident that he enjoyed the full confidence of the proconsuls, who then had the control of every thing, and this confidence could only have resulted from the knowledge of his opinions and sentiments. Bonaparte was then only five-and-twenty years of age. Ricord must, therefore, have been very sure of him. Salicetti succeeded Ricord, and it was naturally to be expected that Bonaparte would enjoy the protection of the new representative. They were countrymen, and even friends, in spite of the difference of their age; and though Salicetti came in immediately after a reaction, it is very certain that he entertained what were called *terrorist* opinions.

When Bonaparte was arrested, Junot, who loved him affectionately, determined to save him either by artifice or force. The punishments of the reign of terror were not yet at an end, and an individual who was the object of any accusation whatever, was in great danger. Bonaparte, however, forbade Junot to resort to any violence. "I am innocent," said he, "and I will trust to the laws." The following is a letter which Bonaparte wrote from his prison to Junot:—

"I see a strong proof of your friendship, my dear Junot, in the proposition you make to me, and I trust you feel convinced that the friendly sentiments that I have long entertained for you remain unabated. Men may be unjust towards me, my dear Junot, but it is enough for me to know that I am innocent. My conscience is the tribunal before which I try my conduct. That conscience is calm when I question it. Do not, therefore, stir in this business. You will only compromise me.

Adieu, my dear Junot, yours,

"BONAPARTE."

This letter was an answer to one which Junot had sent him by a soldier, within the first twenty-four hours after his arrest, when he was not permitted to see him. I do not know why Junot was refused admittance to him, but I think it was because orders had been given to keep Bonaparte in solitary confinement. Junot, in his letter, proposed to aid him in effecting his escape, and suggested some plans which could only have entered the head of an enthusiastic young man like himself.* He declared his determination to share his imprisonment, even if it were doomed to be eternal.

One motive, I do not mean to say the only one, of the animosity shown by Salicetti to Bonaparte, in the affair of Loano, was, that they were at one time suitors to the same lady. I am not sure whether it was in Corsica or in Paris, but I know for a fact that Bonaparte, in spite of his youth, or perhaps I should rather say on account of his youth, was the favoured lover. It was the opinion of my brother, who, as I have already mentioned, was secretary to Salicetti, that Bonaparte owed his life to a circumstance which is not very well known. The fact is, that Salicetti received a letter from Bonaparte, the contents of which appeared to make a deep impression on him. Bonaparte's papers had been delivered into Salicetti's hands,

* Madame Mère, the mother of Bonaparte, always entertained a grateful recollection of Junot's conduct at this period.

who, after an attentive perusal of them, laid them aside with evident dissatisfaction. He then took them up again and read them a second time. Salicetti declined my brother's assistance in the examination of the papers, and after a second examination, which was probably as unsatisfactory as the first, he seated himself with a very abstracted air. It would appear that he had seen among the papers some document which concerned himself. Another curious fact is, that the man who had the care of the papers after they were sealed up, was an inferior clerk entirely under the control of Salicetti; and my brother, whose business it was to have charge of the papers, was directed not to touch them. He has often spoken to me of this circumstance, and I mention it here as one of importance to the history of the time. Nothing that relates to a man like Napoleon can be considered useless or trivial.

What, after all, was the result of this strange business which might have cost Bonaparte his head? for had he been taken to Paris and tried by the Committee of Public Safety, there is little doubt that the friend of Robespierre the younger would have been condemned by Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois. The result was the acquittal of the accused. This result is the more extraordinary, since it would appear that at that time Salicetti stood in fear of the young general. A compliment is even paid to Bonaparte in the decree by which he was provisionally restored to liberty. That liberation was said to be granted on the consideration that General Bonaparte might be useful to the republic. This was foresight; but subsequently, when measures were taken which rendered Bonaparte no longer an object of fear, his name was erased from the list of general officers, and it is a curious fact that Cambacérès, who was destined to be his colleague in the consulate, was one of the persons who signed the act of erasure.

Bonaparte, who was then very unfortunately situated, came to Paris to obtain justice or to endeavour to put into execution some of the thousand projects, which, as he used to tell us, he formed every night when he lay down to rest. He had with him only one aide-de-camp, one friend, whom his adverse fortune attached the more strongly to him. This was Junot, who from that moment gave him abundant proofs of the sincere friendship which never terminated but with his life. Duroc was not connected with Bonaparte until the latter took the command of the army of Italy. It has been frequently asserted that they were acquainted at Toulon, but this is a mistake. Bourrienne, who is well instructed in all these details, relates these facts in their true light. Salicetti and Bonaparte

were not good friends, for the former feared his young compatriot, and they were never in each other's confidence.

The opinion of Bonaparte, after he became consul, respecting the men of the revolution, is well known. He employed in the first offices statesmen who had taken part in the revolution; but, with the exception of Fouché, whom he never liked,* these were not the individuals who made the most distinguished figure in the revolutionary history. It may be remembered that on the occasion of the Infernal Machine, he made a furious attack, in the Council of State, on those whom he denominated the men of blood, the men of September. "France," said he, "will never be happy until they are driven away. It is they who do all the mischief!"

CHAPTER XI.

M. Brunetière—Curious mode of correspondence—My mother's visit to Paris—The Hotel de la Tranquillité—Bonaparte's visit to us—Paris after the 9th Thermidor—Bonaparte and the Muscadins—Scarcity of Bread—The sections declaiming against the Convention—Politics banished from conversation—Salicetti's boots.

My father had an old friend, an advocate, named Brunetière, who maintained communications with the powerful men of the day, and who informed him of all that was going on in Paris, at least as far as he could do so with safety. We were not then in the height of the reign of terror; but there was reason to fear that the revolutionary flame might be rekindled, and caution was advisable. It was no unusual thing to send letters concealed in pies, and in this manner questions and answers travelled under the protection of gastronomic dainties. News was frequently sent from Paris to the country in the lining of a coat, the crown of a hat, or a box of artificial flowers. It was customary to send with these packets a letter, saying, "In compliance with your request, I send you such or such a thing." My mother was sometimes very reluctant to pull to pieces the beautiful articles of millinery which came from Paris in this way. I recollect she once

* It is certain that Bonaparte was never partial to Fouché. He employed him, it is true, but it seemed to be in spite of an instinctive conviction which assured him that Fouché was one of those who would contribute to his downfall.

wore a hat in which a letter was concealed a whole fortnight, without telling my father where it came from, because she knew he would have had it pulled to pieces without mercy. It was to be sure at a moment when no very interesting news was likely to be communicated.

At length affairs assumed a more serene aspect, and my father received repeated invitations to proceed to Paris. My mother, finding that she could not prevail on him to go, determined herself to set out for Paris, and take me along with her; and it was agreed that my father should repair to Bordeaux, where he had some business to settle, and remain there during my mother's absence. On her arrival in the capital, my mother was to ascertain whether it would be safe for my father to join her, and to determine on his future plans. On our arrival in Paris, we alighted at the Hotel de la Tranquillité, in the Rue des Filles Saint-Thomas. We were lodged in a very good suite of apartments on the second floor, overlooking a garden. My mother had only two servants with her, a femme-de-chambre and a valet. My brother had returned to Paris in company with Salicetti, but he was no longer in his employment: he had given up the situation of secretary two months before. His intention was to go to Holland, and to enter into trade. A day or two after our arrival, my mother received visits from some of her friends who had escaped the terrorist proscription, and who felt as if they were restored to a new life. Among the number was M. de Perigord, who owed his miraculous preservation to his valet-de-chambre, Beaulieu. Before the revolution my mother had been acquainted with many Corsicans; though their opinions did not coincide with her own, they nevertheless were frequent visitors at her house. As soon as they knew she had returned, they all flocked to see her. Among them were, Moltedo, the Abbé Arrighi, Aréna, Malicetti, Chiappe, and above all Bonaparte. My brother Albert had informed him of my mother's arrival, and he came immediately to see us.

I may say that it was then I first knew Bonaparte. Previously I had only a confused recollection of him. When he came to see us after our return to Paris, his appearance made an impression upon me which I shall never forget. At that period of his life, Bonaparte was decidedly ugly; he afterwards underwent a total change. I do not speak of the illusive charm which his glory spread around him, but I mean to say that a gradual physical change took place in him in the space of seven years. His emaciated thinness was converted into a fulness of face, and his complexion, which had been yellow and apparently unhealthy, became clear and comparatively fresh; his features, which were angular and sharp, became round and filled out. As to his smile, it was always agreeable. The mode of dressing his hair,

which has such a droll appearance as we see it in the prints of the passage of the bridge of Arcola, was then comparatively simple; for young men of fashion (the *muscadins*), whom he used to rail at so loudly at that time, wore their hair very long. But he was very careless of his personal appearance; and his hair, which was ill-combed and ill-powdered, gave him the look of a sloven. His little hands, too, underwent a great metamorphosis: when I first saw him they were thin, long, and dark; but he was subsequently vain of the beauty of them, and with good reason. In short, when I recollect Napoleon entering the court-yard of the Hotel de la Tranquillité in 1793, with a shabby round hat drawn over his forehead, and his ill-powdered hair hanging over the collar of his grey great-coat, which afterwards became as celebrated as the white plume of Henry IV., without gloves, because he used to say they were a useless luxury, with boots ill-made and ill-blackened, with his thinness and his sallow complexion, in fine, when I recollect him at that time, and think what he was afterwards, I do not see the same man in the two pictures.

My mother, who was the best hearted and most natural of women, frankly expressed all the pleasure she felt at seeing him again. She spoke to him of Salicetti, whom, she said, she had blamed for his treatment of him. A smile passed rapidly over the lips of Bonaparte. "He wished," said he, "to ruin me, but *my star* prevented him. However, I must not boast of my star, for who knows what may be my fate." I never shall forget the expression of his countenance as he uttered these last words. My mother endeavoured to sooth him, and she succeeded better than I could have imagined. I confess that I was much surprised when I saw Salicetti and Bonaparte come next day to dine with us, to all appearance very good friends.

At this period Paris was in a most disturbed state. Tragical scenes daily arose in the bosom of the Convention, and disgraced its national majesty. The accomplices of Robespierre, alarmed at the death of Danton, had overthrown the Dictator to save themselves. They knew not what to do, for they could no longer keep up the mask they had borrowed to effect the Thermidorian revolution.

Immediately after the 9th Thermidor, the members of the Committee of Public Safety were accused. It was, I think, Legendre who attacked Collot-d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, Barrère, Amar-Vouland, and David. This attack took place about the 10th Fructidor. Carrier was also brought to the Convention, but it was to be condemned. He perished on the 26th Frimaire following, and it must be confessed that his last moments were certainly marked by courage. It is true that courage may be an attendant on crime as well as on virtue.

It was in the midst of these circumstances that we arrived in Paris. On the day of our arrival M. Brunetière told us he was very sorry that he had advised us to come. Bonaparte confirmed his apprehension. He had just then received a letter from his mother, in which she observed that the re-action would probably deluge the south of France in blood.

"It is those royalist coxcombs," said Napoleon, "who are making all this uproar. They would be very glad to glean after the battle of the patriots. What fools there are in that Convention! I am very glad to see that Permon has not adopted the ridiculous fashion of these young men. They are all worthless Frenchmen." Those to whom Bonaparte alluded wore grey great-coats with black collars and green cravats. Their hair, instead of being *à la Titus*, which was the prevailing fashion of the day, was powdered, plaited, and turned up with a comb, while on each side of the face hung two long curls called dog's ears (*oreilles de chien*). As these young men were very frequently attacked, they carried about with them large sticks which were not always merely weapons of defence, for the frays which arose in Paris at that time were often provoked by them.

The scarcity of bread and the necessaries of life now began to be sensibly felt. My sister secretly sent us flour from the south. In so doing she was obliged to resort to various subterfuges, for a serious punishment would have been the result of the discovery. The people who had endured misery under Robespierre, because Robespierre flattered them, now openly threatened to rebel. Every day the bar of the Convention was invaded by the sections of Paris, and crowds of people traversed the streets exclaiming, "Bread, bread! we, at least, had bread in 1793! Down with the republic!"

One day Bonaparte came to dine with us, and after dinner we took a walk out in the direction of the Tuileries. Bonaparte offered my mother his arm, and I walked with my brother. After we had crossed the Passage Feydeau and reached the Boulevard, we heard horrid vociferations against the Convention. "Madame Permon," said Napoleon, "let me advise you not to go any further. These are not scenes for women to witness. Let me conduct you home, and I will come and gather what news I can, and return to inform you of what I hear." We immediately returned home, and Bonaparte and Albert afterwards went out. Neither of them returned that night. They informed us that they had found it impossible to get back, and, besides, they had been to the Convention. "There they were," said Bonaparte, "roaring for the constitution of 1793: they were like so many madmen." "And you, Napoleon," said my mother, "what

your opinion of it? I think the constitution of 1793 is a good one." Bonaparte was off his guard, and replied, "Why, it is good in one sense, to be sure, but all that is connected with carnage is bad." Perceiving that my mother smiled, he recollected himself and said: *Ah! Signora Panoria! Signora Panoria! quest'è malissimo! come! mi volete prendere per sopresa?** Then he added with a smile: "Oh no! no constitution of '93, I do not like it." That same day Salicetti came to see us. He appeared out of humour, was abstracted, and frequently did not answer to the purpose when he was spoken to. When he was in this sort of humour and conversing with Bonaparte, the discussion was sure to take an angry tone, so that my mother always tried to turn the conversation from politics.

A few evenings before the first of Prairial,† my mother had a little party. She told the gentlemen whom she invited that she would have no politics introduced. "Is it not enough," said she, "to be roused out of one's sleep of a night by your tocsins and your drums, to say nothing of the harmonious choruses of your market women? Promise me that you will not speak of politics." The promise was given; but the difficulty was to keep it. What was to be talked about? All subjects of conversation were annihilated. The theatres produced nothing, and literature was dead.

Bonaparte for a long time endeavoured to maintain the conversation; but what could he do? Even M. de Narbonne or M. de Talleyrand must have failed. At length it was proposed to tell stories: Bonaparte liked this way of passing an evening, and he began to relate a number of anecdotes which were interesting in themselves, but which were rendered doubly so by his original manner of telling them. He spoke French very badly, frequently committing the grossest faults of language, and his ignorance on certain points of ordinary education was remarkable. Yet, in spite of those disadvantages, every one listened to him with delight. However, after a time, the conversation flagged, and an inclination to touch upon the forbidden subject soon predominated. I recollect that at that moment Salicetti, who was in none of the best of humours, was walking about the drawing-room, while the creaking of his boots made that monotonous and irritating noise which always annoyed my mother, but which was now quite intolerable to her, for she was vexed by the dullness of the company. "Salicetti," said

* "Ah! Madame Panoria! that is very mischievous of you. How! You wish to take me by surprise, do you?"

† The 18th of May, 1795.

she, "can you not be at ease yourself and permit others to be so?" Salicetti, whose thoughts were at that moment wandering in a world far removed from my mother's tea-table circle, suddenly turned round, and bowing with an air of constrained politeness, said, "No more, I thank you; I have taken two cups, and I already feel the effect on my nerves." He then resumed his pacing backwards and forwards, while his odious boots creaked more loudly than ever.

Patience was never my mother's prevailing virtue. She hastily rose from her seat and advanced towards Salicetti with that light step which was so peculiarly her own. Seizing his stout arm with her little hand, she turned him completely round, and he stood not a little astonished at his own *pirouette*. "Salicetti," said she, "I like to be heard when I speak, and when I make a request I wish it to be complied with. This is somewhat despotic, perhaps, but I cannot help it. I am too old to accommodate myself to your new-fashioned customs, and, what is more, I will not. We women are all queens without kingdoms. We are dethroned; I feel this to my cost, but still, I trust, I retain a little power in my own house. Here, at least, I am a sovereign, and my subjects must obey me. Do you mean to rebel against my authority?" "No," exclaimed Salicetti, delighted at the graceful manner in which my mother had rebuked him, and seizing her two little hands which he kissed alternately, said, "I rebel against your authority! certainly not. What have I done that could lead you to suppose so?" His answer was repeated to him, and it turned out as the company had already guessed, that he thought my mother was offering him another cup of tea.

CHAPTER XII.

New troubles in Paris—Bonaparte's poverty—His servant and my mother's femme-de-chambre—The Jardin des Plantes—Mutual confidence—Junot in love with Paulette Bonaparte—Napoleon's characteristic reply—Revolutionary scenes.

My mother proposed to make a visit to Gascony to settle some business, and afterwards to return to Paris with my father, the state of whose health made her uneasy. She wished to bring him within reach of the best medical assistance; but how was she to return to Paris at a moment when the revolution, suffering from the crimes

committed in its name, could offer no guarantee or security to any one? The Convention, which at that time included many pure and honest republicans, beheld its power braved and disavowed: every thing seemed to be returning to that unhappy state, the bare remembrance of which excited horror. In spite of this, balls were resumed, and the theatres were filled every evening. It may truly be said of the French that they meet death singing and dancing. Balls, theatres, and concerts were nightly crowded, while famine was staring us in the face, and we were threatened with all the horrors of anarchy.

Bonaparte came daily to visit my mother, and he frequently entered into warm political discussions with persons whom he met at her residence. These discussions almost always led to violent language, which displeased my mother. But Bonaparte was unfortunate: she knew it, and that consideration rendered her indulgent to him.

My mother told me one day that she had learned some particulars respecting General Bonaparte which very much distressed her, the more especially as she could do nothing to assist him. These particulars had been communicated to her by Mariette, her femme-de-chambre. Mariette was a very pretty and a very good girl; Bonaparte's servant admired her and wished to marry her. She, however, did not like him, and as he was moreover very poor, she declined his offer. I give these details because they are connected with an affair which I shall presently have to allude to. Bonaparte's servant informed Mariette that the general was often in want of money; "but," added he, "he has an aide-de-camp who shares with him all he gets. When he is lucky at play, the largest share of his winnings is always for his general. The aide-de-camp's family sometimes sends him money, and then almost all is given to the general. The general," added the man, "loves this aide-de-camp as dearly as if he were his own brother." This aide-de-camp was no other than Junot, who was destined at a later period to be my husband.

On Bonaparte's return to Paris, after the misfortunes of which he accused Salicetti of being the cause, he was in very destitute circumstances. His family, who were banished from Corsica, found an asylum at Marseilles; and they could not now do for him what they would have done had they been in the country whence they derived their pecuniary resources. From time to time he received remittances of money, and I suspect they came from his excellent brother Joseph, who had then recently married Mademoiselle Clary; but, with all his economy, these supplies were insufficient. Bonaparte was therefore in absolute distress. Junot often used to speak of the

six months they passed together in Paris at this time. When they took an evening stroll on the Boulevard, which used to be the resort of young men, mounted on fine horses, and displaying all the luxury which they were permitted to show at that time, Bonaparte would declaim against fate, and express his contempt for the dandies with their whiskers and their *oreilles de chien*, who as they rode past were eulogising in ecstasy the manner in which Madame Scio sang *paole pafumée, paole panachée.** "And it is on such beings as these," he would say, "that Fortune confers her favours: heavens! how contemptible is human nature!"

Junot, whose friendship for Bonaparte was of that ardent kind which is formed only in youth, shared with him all that he received from his family, who, though not rich, were in easy circumstances. He used sometimes to resort to the gaming-table, but before he did so he invariably deposited in the hands of Bonaparte three-quarters of the allowance he had received from Burgundy: the other quarter was allotted to the chances of *vingt-et-un*. Junot was often successful at play: on those occasions the two friends used to make merry, and pay off their most pressing debts. One morning Bonaparte and Junot were walking together in the Jardin des Plantes. Bonaparte was always fond of these solitary promenades: they rendered him communicative and confiding, and he seemed to feel himself nearer to the presence of the Deity, of whom he used to say a *faithful friend is the true image.*†

About this time the Jardin des Plantes had been greatly improved by the exertions of a man whom France ought to remember with gratitude. The Jardin des Plantes, which had originally been confined exclusively to the cultivation of medical plants, became, under the superintendence of M. Tournefort, a nursery for all branches of botany. Buffon, conjointly with Daubenton, formed the cabinet of natural history. Thibaudeau, who was a member of the Committee of Public Instruction, promoted the advancement of the arts and sciences with the enlightened zeal with which he discharged his duty in every other department. He was aided by able auxiliaries in the Jardin des Plantes. Junot's uncle, the Bishop of Metz, a distinguished naturalist, was the intimate friend of Daubenton and Buffon. Junot, therefore, was always kindly received by him, and he often visited the Jardin des Plantes accompanied by his general.

* This affected mode of dropping the *r* was common among the dandies of that time, or, as they used to be called, the *incroyables*.

† I give this phrase literally; I have often heard it repeated by Bonaparte.

"There," Junot used to say, "we not only inhaled pure air, but it seemed, as soon as we passed the gate, that we left a heavy burthen behind us. All around us presented the aspect of peace and kindliness. The evening was generally the time for our visits to M. Daubenton. We used to find him like a patriarch, surrounded by his labourers, whose planting and digging he was superintending. He was actively assisted by the brothers Thouin, whose zeal for the science of botany induced them to work in the plantations like common gardeners." The eldest of these two brothers was a man of rare acquirements; and Bonaparte used to be fond of walking with him round the extensive hot-houses, which were already beginning to be filled with rare plants, and which subsequently, under his auspices, became the finest temple ever raised to nature in the midst of a city.

On one of Bonaparte's visits to the Jardin des Plantes, after he had lingered longer than usual in conversation with the brothers Thouin, he strolled with Junot into some of the shady avenues of the garden. It was a delicious evening, and a thousand rose trees in full bloom scattered perfume through the air. The two friends walked together arm in arm, and in confident conversation: they were then in closer communion with each other than they ever were afterwards in a gilded cabinet. A lovely night has always a powerful influence on minds susceptible of ardent feeling. Bonaparte was afterwards governed by an overpowering passion, which subjugated every other within him, and reigned paramount: I need not name it. But at this period he was very young, and his heart beat warmly, for he loved. He made Junot his confidant, and spoke on the subject with much acerbity, for his love was not returned. Junot has often told me that if Bonaparte had not himself torn asunder the fetters which then bound him, the consequences of his passion might have been terrible. On this occasion his voice trembled while he expressed his feelings, and Junot was deeply affected by his emotion. But it was even then plain that there was within him an extraordinary force which struggled against his weakness. He broke off the conversation himself, and appeared to have forgotten the cause of his agitation.

Confidence creates confidence. Junot had also a heart full of feelings which required to be disclosed to a friend, and the ear of Bonaparte had often heard his story. Junot loved, to infatuation, Paulette Bonaparte. His youthful warmth of feeling could not withstand so charming a creature as Paulette then was. His passion was a delirium; but his secret was not a week old when it was made known to his general. Honour commanded the disclosure, since his reason had not enabled him to resist his passion. Bonaparte received his declaration

neither with assent nor dissent. He consoled him, however. But what gave him more satisfaction than all the words of his friend, was a belief, amounting almost to certainty, that Paulette would say *Yes* with pleasure, as soon as he should be able to offer her an establishment—not a rich one, as Bonaparte used to remark, but sufficient to be a security against the distressing prospects of bringing into the world children destined to be miserable.

On the very day of which I have been speaking, Junot, emboldened by what Bonaparte had told him in disburthening his own heart, was more than ever urgent on the subject of Paulette. He had received a letter from his father which he showed to Bonaparte. In this letter M. Junot informed his son that he had nothing to give at the moment, but that his part of the family property would one day be 20,000 francs. "I shall then be rich," said Junot, "since with my pay I shall have an income of 1,200 livres. My dear general, I beseech you, write to Madame Bonaparte, and tell her that you have seen my father's letter. Would you wish him to write to Marseilles himself?"

On leaving the Jardin des Plantes, they crossed the river in a boat, and passed through the streets to the Boulevard. Having arrived in front of the Chinese Baths, they walked about in the opposite alley. While ascending and descending this part of the Boulevard, Bonaparte listened attentively to Junot; but he was no longer the same man as when under the odoriferous shades they had just quitted. It seemed that on returning to the bustle of life, the tumult of society, he resumed all the fetters and obligations imposed by the state. His manner was, however, always kind. He only pretended to give advice. "I cannot write to my mother, to make this proposal," he said; "for you are to have at last, it seems, 1,200 livres of income, and that is very well; but you have not got them yet. Your father wears well, my good fellow, and will make you wait a long time for your livres. The truth is, you have nothing but your lieutenant's pay; as to Paulette, she has not so much. So then to sum up; you have nothing, she has nothing —what is the total? Nothing. You cannot then marry at present. You must wait. We shall perhaps see better days, my friend—yes! We shall have them, even should I go to seek them in another quarter of the world."*

* I have described this conversation fully as Junot related it, because I think the conduct of Bonaparte during the evening in which it occurred was very remarkable. Junot recollected all that passed minutely, and could point out the part of the Boulevard on which they were when Bonaparte spoke those words which later events have rendered so worthy of notice.

At this period insurrections were things of daily occurrence. That of the 12th of Germinal, which was almost entirely the work of women, had a peculiar character. In the evening and in the course of the following day, we saw several deputies who described the events. Some were quite cast down, and constantly exclaimed, "France is ruined!" The account they gave of what had passed was doubtless alarming. Women had forced their way into the hall in which the representatives of the nation were assembled and had driven them out. "It was from mere fatigue," said my brother, "that the mob retired." "And what did the mountain do during the disturbance?" asked my mother. "It supported the demands of the mob. All that I can further say is, that I was told that the noise made by the female insurgents was so great that nobody could understand what was going on. After their departure the deputies ventured to resume their seats and to proceed to business." Amidst our conversation, Salicetti was gloomy and silent. He made me as usual sit down beside him, and spoke of my sister's marriage or any thing else, without paying attention to what I said. However, he thus kept himself in countenance, and avoided a conversation, the subject of which was to him too important to allow of his treating it with indifference.

At the epoch of the first of Prairial there were elements in the Convention capable of producing the most terrible effects. The terrorist party sought to save such of its members as were compromised not only in public opinion, but by the fact of being subject to a regular charge of impeachment. The contest was terrible, for it was for life or death. Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, and Barrère were the men chiefly dreaded. From Carnot, Robert Lindet, and others no evil was to be apprehended, because, though they might perhaps be misled by adopting an erroneous opinion, the public could rely on their honesty. But, good heaven! what a reaction would there have been, had the Thermidor party been overthrown! That, however, was the point at issue. The terrorists stirred up the people, who in a season of scarcity, were easily led astray; and consequently we had mobs daily assembled by the cry, "*Vive la Constitution de 93!*" Fortunately the seditions were suppressed. During the trials of the terrorists, Carnot was the only one who displayed a noble character; all the others were miserable creatures; and the whole Convention was almost as contemptible. Had not André Dumont moved and urged with energy the banishment of Barrère, Billaud-Varennes and Collot-d'Herbois, it is not improbable that the whole Convention would have been outlawed.

The sentence of exile was voted by acclamation, and six deputies

were condemned to imprisonment in the castle of Ham.* But such was the infatuation of the Convention, that if two steps were made forward towards a public good, they were sure to be followed by four backward. The deputies ordered to be arrested walked about Paris, and if they had chosen they might have gone to the theatre on the night of the 13th, for though condemned they were still at liberty: these were indeed the days of anarchy!

It was necessary to act decisively; but at a moment when every journeyman perruquier took the name of Brutus, or Mutius Scævola, there was not in the whole Convention, notwithstanding the great talents which formerly shone in it, a man whom any would have been simple enough to call a Cicero. However, Thibaudeau at last arose. In an energetic speech he reminded the Convention of its duty to watch over the public safety. The outlawry of the deputies was decreed. General Pichegru received the necessary orders of the Convention, which were speedily executed. Paris remained tranquil, and three deputies were sent to Rochefort.†

CHAPTER XIII.

The 20th May—Project of bombarding the Faubourg Saint-Antoine—Death of Ferraud—Salicetti on the list of the proscribed—He flies for refuge to my mother's lodgings—His concealment—Bonaparte's visit to my mother—Remarkable conversation.

The victory thus obtained over the terrorist party on the 1st of April, might have induced a belief that that party, as far at least as it had power to do mischief, was annihilated, and that the pure republicans who composed its extreme right, brought round to the good cause, would promote centralization as a means of union, and more especially as a means of averting the anarchy which threatened the state. But the Convention, which was then the sole representative power, was so wretchedly organized, and held out so discouraging a prospect, that the

* Léonard Bourdon, Hugues, Châles, Faussedoise, Duhem, and Choudieu.

† Barrère went there with the others, but as usual he took care not to make one in a disagreeable party. He contrived to stop at Rochefort and did not embark. The French, who laugh at every thing, said this was the first time that Barrère did not follow the stream. A man of wit has said of him that he is one of those characters who are neither esteemed nor hated.

genius of disorder raised its head, and threatened once more to plunge all into chaos.

The Convention was no longer popular, because it manifested no readiness to alleviate the sufferings of the people, now rendered intolerable. Aversion had succeeded to the attachment which the public once fondly cherished for the Convention, and this was especially the case in Paris. Meanwhile the enemies of order took advantage of these elements of mischief, and did all in their power to fan the flame.

On the morning of the 20th of May we were awakened by loud shouts in the streets; the tocsin sounded to arms, and another day of blood was added to the calendar which took its date from 1789! Enough has already been said of that dreadful day. I recollect that terror reigned every where. The conspirators had promised a day of pillage to the three faubourgs, and particularly to that of St. Antoine. The whole population of this last district was in arms: they were in the extreme of misery. There was greater reason to dread the issue of this day than that of the 14th of July, the 6th of October, or the 10th of August. It was not a castle or a court to which the animosity of the people was directed, but every thing elevated above the very lowest grade of society was marked out in the list of proscription. This it was that saved France as well as the Convention. All those who had any thing to lose united themselves into corps, which were very superior to unorganized masses acting without any plan, and apparently without leaders.

Whilst the most frightful scenes were passing in the Convention, the respectable inhabitants of Paris shut themselves up in their houses, concealed their valuables, and awaited with fearful anxiety the result. Towards evening, my brother, whom we had not seen during the whole day, came home to get something to eat; he was almost famished, not having tasted food since the morning. Disorder still raged, and we heard the most frightful noise in the streets, mingled with the beating of drums. The faubourg St. Antoine, which had been regularly armed in pursuance of the proposition of Tallien, excited the most serious alarm. My brother had scarcely finished his hasty repast, when General Bonaparte arrived to make a similar demand upon our hospitality. He also told us, he had tasted nothing since the morning, for all the restaurateurs were closed.* He contented himself with that which my brother had left, and, while eating, he told us the news of the day. It was most appalling! My brother had informed us but of part. He did not know of the assassination of the unfortunate Ferraud, whose body

* These establishments were not so numerous in those days as at present.

had been cut almost piecemeal. "They took his head," said Bonaparte, "and presented it to poor Boissy-d'Anglas,* and the shock of this fiend-like act was almost death to the president in his chair. Truly," added he, "if we continue thus to sully our revolution, it will be a disgrace to be a Frenchman."

Perhaps the most alarming circumstance was the project entertained by Barras of bombarding the faubourg St. Antoine. "He is at this moment," said Bonaparte, "at the end of the boulevard, and proposes, so he tells me, to throw bombs into the faubourg: I have counselled him by no means to do so. The population of the faubourg would issue forth, and disperse through Paris, committing every excess. It is altogether very sad work. Have you seen Salicetti during the last few days?" he inquired, after a moment's silence; "they say he is implicated in the affair of Soubrani and Bourbotte. It is likewise suspected that Romme is compromised in that business. I shall be very sorry for it. Romme is a worthy man, and I believe a stanch and honest republican. As to Salicetti!" Here Bonaparte paused, struck his forehead with his hand, contracted his eyebrows, and his whole frame seemed agitated. In a voice trembling with emotion, he continued, "Salicetti has injured me greatly. He has thrown a cloud over the bright dawn of my youth, he has blighted my hopes of glory! I say again, he has done me much wrong. However, I bear him no ill will." My brother was about to defend Salicetti. "Cease, Permon, cease," exclaimed Bonaparte; "that man, I tell you, has been my evil genius. Dumerbion really loved me, and would have employed me suitably; but that report spread at my return from Genoa, and to which malice lent its venom to make it the foundation of an accusation: that report ought, in reality, to have been a source of honour to me! No! I may forgive, but to forget is another matter. Yet, as I said before, I bear him no ill will." While speaking thus, Bonaparte appeared abstracted. About midnight he departed with my brother.

Next day we learned that the Convention had ordered the arrest of several of its members, among whom were Soubrani, Romme, Bourbotte, &c.; Salicetti's name was not mentioned. "Here are more proscriptions," said my mother. "My dear," said she to Albert, "we are, no doubt, under great obligations to Salicetti for what he has done for your father and you; but gratitude cannot make me indifferent to the impropriety of receiving a man who is

* The admirable conduct of Boissy-d'Anglas on that day will always be mentioned in history.

accused of wishing to bring back the days of 1793. Salicetti is not on the list of the proscribed, therefore I can, with a clear conscience, give him to understand that his visits are not agreeable. His opinions are becoming, every day, less and less in unison with mine."

This was on the 21st of May: my mother expected a party of friends to dinner. She was to leave Paris in a few days for Bordeaux, and in four months was to return with my father to Paris. Bonaparte was one of the company invited to dine with us that day. It was six o'clock. One of the guests had arrived, and my mother was sitting in the drawing-room conversing with him, when Mariette came and whispered to her that there was somebody in her chamber who wished to speak with her alone. The girl added, "I know who it is, madam: you may come." My mother immediately rose and went to her chamber, and beheld, near the window, a man half concealed by the curtain. He made a sign to her with his hand. My mother called me, and desiring me to shut the door, advanced towards this man, whom, to her astonishment, she discovered to be Salicetti. He was pale as death: his lips were as white as his teeth, and his dark eyes appeared to flash fire! He was truly frightful. "I am proscribed," he said to my mother, in an under-tone, and in breathless haste; "that is to say, I am condemned to death. But for Gautier, whom I just now met on the boulevard, I was going to that den of brigands, and should have been lost. Madame Permon," he continued, after a pause, during which his eyes were steadfastly fixed on my mother, "Madame Permon, I hope I have not been deceived in relying on your generosity. You will save me. To prevail on you to do so, I need not, I am sure, remind you that I saved your son and husband."

My mother took Salicetti by the hand, and conducted him into the next room, which was my bed-chamber. Several persons had now assembled in the drawing-room, and she thought she heard the voice of Bonaparte. She was ready to faint with terror. In my chamber she knew she could not be overheard. "Salicetti," she said, "I will not waste time in words. All that I can grant, you may command; but, there is one thing more dear to me than life, that is, the safety of my children. By concealing you for a few hours, and this house cannot afford you any longer security, I shall not save you, and I only bring my own head to the scaffold, and probably endanger the lives of my children. I owe you gratitude, but I leave you to yourself to determine whether I ought to carry it thus far."

I never saw my mother look so beautiful as when at this moment

she fixed her eyes earnestly on me. "I am not so selfish," replied Salicetti, "as to ask for any thing which may expose you to such danger. My plan is this, and on it rests my only hope. This house being an hotel will be the last to be suspected. The woman who keeps it has, I presume, no objection to get money; I will give her plenty: let me remain concealed here only eight days. At the expiration of that time you are to set out for Gascony; you can take me with you, and thus save my life. If you refuse me an asylum, even for a few hours, I shall be dragged to the scaffold, there to forfeit my life, while I saved those of your husband and your son." "Salicetti," said my mother, "this is unkind and ungenerous: you know my obligation to you, and you take advantage of it. I ask you again, what I can do for you situated as I am in this public hotel, a house which is filled with strangers, and which is the daily resort of your enemies: for you know that Bonaparte is your enemy. Besides, the mistress of this house is hostile to your opinions, and I doubt whether any reward could induce her to hazard her life to serve you. In short, we are surrounded by difficulties."

At this moment the chamber door opened, and my mother ran towards the person who was about to enter. It was Albert; he came to inquire why dinner was delayed. "All the company have arrived," he said, "except Bonaparte, and he has sent an apology." My mother clasped her hands, and raised them to heaven: she desired him to go down stairs, and she followed him. "I was just reading a letter which I have received from your sister. She has sent me a *dinde aux truffes*, and if our friends will wait so long for dinner, we will have it cooked for to-day; if not, it will be a reason for another little party." My mother uttered these words as she entered the drawing-room, holding in her hand a letter which she had snatched up in passing through her own chamber.

Her reason for inventing this long story was, that the gentleman whom she left in the drawing-room, when Mariette called her out, was a most notorious gossip, and she took it for granted that he had already told all the company that there was something very mysterious in her disappearance. But her manner was so natural that no one had the least doubt of the arrival of the *dinde aux truffes*, which it was unanimously agreed should be cooked next day. My mother then begged leave to retire for a few moments to finish her letter. She hastened to her chamber, slipped the bolt of her door, and rejoined Salicetti, whom she found seated in a chair with his head leaning on both his hands. "We may esteem ourselves happy," said she, "that Bonaparte is not here to scrutinize our words and

looks. Now let us settle what is to be done." "If you are willing," said Salicetti, "the thing is easy: will you consent to save me?" My mother did not give an immediate reply. Her frequent change of colour betrayed the violent agitation of her feelings. At length she became so pale that I thought she would have fainted away. Salicetti, who interpreted her silence as a refusal, took up his hat, muttered some words which I did not distinctly hear, and was about to leave the room, when my mother caught him by the arm.

"Stay," she said, "this roof is yours. My son must discharge his debt, and it is my duty to discharge my husband's." "Enough, enough," said Salicetti, "all will be well. Now go and join your company. Mariette will take care of me. I have said but two words to her, yet those two magic words have power to make her lay down her life to serve me. My dear girl," said he to me, drawing me back as I was about to follow my mother, "I have spoken before you because I know you cannot remain in ignorance of this affair. I need not warn you of the consequences of indiscretion." "Ah! fear nothing," I exclaimed, throwing myself into my mother's arms, whose eyes were fixed upon me with an expression of despair. My dear mother thought only of her children at that moment when her own head was at stake. She stayed a minute longer in her chamber to recover herself. Her ardent feelings rendered her agitation extreme; but she was gifted with wonderful self-control, and when she entered the drawing-room nobody would have suspected that she had to conceal an important secret from the knowledge of those who surrounded her.

The dinner was very gay. The company were animated by a feeling of satisfaction at the result of the events of the two preceding days. Brunetiére was of the party, and though never deficient in cheerfulness, his spirits seemed that day to be doubled. As soon as the company had departed, my mother acquainted Albert with Salicetti's concealment. My brother trembled for her and for me; but he saw the necessity of actively adopting some precautions for Salicetti's security.

After some deliberation, it was resolved to adopt Salicetti's suggestion, and communicate the secret to Madame Grétry, the mistress of the hotel. She readily entered into our views. "I can manage this affair," said she. "It is only necessary that Madame Permon should change her apartment. There is a hiding-place in her chamber which saved four people during the reign of terror. It shall save more. At least while I live here."

All the necessary arrangements were immediately made. We

gave out to our friends that my mother had received a letter from my father, in which he mentioned that he was coming to Paris, and that, consequently, my mother was not to set off. Some time after, we were to pretend we had received a second letter from my father, requesting my mother to come to him. It was important to have a reason for every thing we did.

Next morning, about eleven o'clock, we received a visit from General Bonaparte, and as the scene which then ensued made a greater impression on me than almost any event of my life, I will describe it minutely: Bonaparte was at that time attired in the costume he wore almost ever after. He had on a gray great-coat, very plainly made, buttoned up to his chin, a round hat, which was either drawn over his forehead, so as almost to conceal his eyes, or stuck upon the back of his head, so that it appeared in danger of falling off, and a black cravat, very clumsily tied. This was Bonaparte's usual dress. At that period, indeed, nobody, either man or woman, paid any great attention to elegance of appearance, and I must confess that Bonaparte's costume did not then appear so droll as it now does on recollection. He brought with him a bouquet of violets which he presented to my mother. This piece of gallantry was so extraordinary on his part, that we could not help smiling at it. He smiled too, and said, "I suppose I make but a sorry *cavaliere servante*."

"Well, Madame Permon," said he after some further conversation, "Salicetti will now, in his turn, be able to appreciate the bitter fruits of arrest! And to him they ought to be the more bitter, because the trees which bear them, were first planted by him and his adherents."—"How," exclaimed my mother with an air of astonishment, at the same time motioning me to close the drawing-room door, "is Salicetti arrested?"—"How! do you not know that he has been proscribed since yesterday? I presumed that you must know the fact since it was in your house that he was concealed."—"Concealed in my house!" cried my mother, "surely, my dear Napoleon, you are mad! Methinks before I entered into such a scheme, it would be as well to have a place I could call *my house*. I beseech you, General, do not repeat such a joke in any other place. I assure you it would be endangering my life."

Bonaparte rose from his seat, advanced slowly towards my mother, and, crossing his arms, fixed his eyes on her for some time in silence. My mother did not flinch beneath his eagle glance. "Madame Permon," he said, "Salicetti is concealed in your house—nay, do not interrupt me; I know that yesterday, at five o'clock, he was seen on the

boulevard, speaking with Gauthier, who advised him not to go to the Convention. He then proceeded in this direction; and it is very well known, that he has not in this neighbourhood any acquaintance, you excepted, who would risk their own safety as well as that of their friends by secreting him. Now, he has not been at the Palais Egalité, he therefore must have fled to you for an asylum." "And by what right," replied my mother, with unshaken firmness, "should Salicetti seek an asylum here? He is well aware that our political sentiments are at variance: he knew too, that I was on the point of leaving Paris; for, had I not received a letter from my husband, I should have been on the road to Gascony to-morrow morning."—"My dear Madame Permon, you may well ask by what right he should apply to you for concealment? To come to a lone woman, who might be compromised for affording some few hours of safety to an outlaw who merits his fate, is an act to which no consideration ought to have driven him. You owe him *gratitude:* that is a bill of exchange you are bound to honour; and he has come in person to demand payment. Has he not, Mademoiselle Loulou?" As he pronounced these words he turned sharply round towards me.

I was sitting at the window at work, and at the moment he spoke, I pretended to be looking at one of the pots of flowers which were before me. My mother, who understood my meaning, said, "Laurette, General Bonaparte speaks to you, my dear!" Thus challenged, I looked up, and my embarrassment might naturally have been attributed to my consciousness of having been unintentionally rude: so I hoped at least; but we had to deal with one who was not to be imposed upon. Bonaparte took my hand, and pressing it between both his own, said to my mother, "I ask your pardon, madam, I have done wrong: your daughter has taught me a lesson."—"You give her credit for what she does not deserve," replied my mother; "she has taught you no lesson, but I will teach you one by and by, if you persist in an assertion for which there is no foundation, and which, if repeated abroad, would entail very serious consequences to me."

In a tone of considerable emotion, Bonaparte replied: "Madame Permon, you are an excellent woman, and Salicetti is a villain; you could not close your doors against him, he was well aware; and he would cause you to compromise your own safety and that of your child! I never liked him, now I despise him; he has done me mischief enough; but for that he has had his motives, and you have known them. Is it not so?" My mother shook her head. "What, has Permon never told you?"—"Never."—"Well, that is astonishing! But you shall know some day or other. Salicetti, in that affair of

Loano, behaved like a wretch. Junot would have killed him if I had not prevented him. That spirited youth, animated by friendship for me, wanted to challenge him, and swore he would throw him out of the window if he refused to meet him. Now, Salicetti is proscribed, and in his turn will have to experience all the misery attendant on a broken fortune!"—"Napoleon," said my mother, taking him by the hand, and fixing upon him a look of kindness, "I assure you, on my honour, that Salicetti is not in my apartments; but stay—shall I tell you all?"—"Tell me, tell me," exclaimed Napoleon, with a vehemence uncommon to him. "Well then, Salicetti was under my roof yesterday at six o'clock; but he left it a few hours after. I pointed out to him the moral impossibility of his remaining with me, living as I do in a hotel. Salicetti admitted the justness of my objection, and took his departure.

Whilst my mother was speaking, Bonaparte kept his eyes fixed upon her with indescribable earnestness; when she had concluded, he began to pace about the room with hurried steps. "'Tis just as I suspected," he exclaimed; "he was coward enough to say to a woman, 'Expose your life for mine.' But did the wretch who came to interest you in his fate, did he tell you that he had just assassinated one of his colleagues? Had he, think you, even washed his gory hands before he touched yours to implore your protection?"—"*Napoleone! Napoleone!*" exclaimed my mother, "*quest' è troppo! Tacete; se non tacete, me ne vado. Se hanno ammazzato quest' uomo, poi non è colpa sua!*"*

Whenever my mother was violently excited, she always spoke Italian or Greek, and often to people who understood neither the one nor the other. Salicetti heard the whole of this conversation, for he was separated from us only by a thin partition; as for me, I trembled under the momentous expectation of seeing him issue from his hiding-place. I then knew but little of the world. After some further conversation of the same kind, Bonaparte rose to take his leave. "Then you really believe he returned home?" said he, as he took up his hat. "Yes," replied my mother; "I told him that since he must conceal himself in Paris, it were best to bribe the people of his own hotel because that would be the last place where his enemies would think of searching for him." Bonaparte then left us, and it was high time, for my poor mother was exhausted. She beckoned me to go and bolt her chamber-door, and open that of Salicetti's retreat.

* Napoleon! Napoleon! this is too much! Be silent: if you are not, leave me! Though the man has been murdered, it does not follow that it is his fault.

I never liked Salicetti. There was something about him, which to me was always repulsive. When I read the story of the Vampire, I associated that ideal character with the recollection of Salicetti. His pale jaundiced complexion, his dark glaring eyes, his lips, which turned deadly white whenever he was agitated by any powerful emotion, all seemed present to me. When I opened the door after Bonaparte's departure, the sight of Salicetti produced in me a feeling of horror which I shall never forget. He sat on a small chair, at the bedside, his head leaning on his hand which was covered with blood, as was likewise the bed itself, and a basin over which he was leaning, was full. He had been seized with a hemorrhage, and streams of blood were running from his mouth and nose. His face was frightfully pallid, and his whole appearance affected me to such a degree, that it haunted me in dreams a long time after. My mother ran to him; he had nearly swooned. She took his hand; it was quite cold. We called up Mariette; and on her applying some vinegar to his nose, he recovered.

CHAPTER XIV.

The trial of Romme, Soubrani, and their colleagues—Project for saving Salicetti—Sentence and death of the prisoners—Horrible scene.

PREPARATIONS were making for the trial of the parties accused of the proceedings of Prairial. The officers were on the look-out for Salicetti, and another representative. Salicetti was not beloved by his colleagues. He was certainly a man of talent, and full of ambition; but the projects he wished to realize were of a nature to bring down on their author severe retribution. Romme, a distinguished mathematician, was already arrested, as was also Goujon, who, since the opening of the Convention, had rendered himself remarkable for his private virtues and republican sentiments; Soubrani, Duquesnoi, Duroi, and Bourbotte, were also in custody. Each of these individuals were distinguished, as well by their personal character as by their statesman-like qualities. What reflections were awakened at seeing such men seated on the criminal bench!

My mother received a letter from my father, who, having heard of the danger of Salicetti, desired her to do whatever she could to render him assistance. This letter was delivered to her by M. Emilhaud, of

Bordeaux, a gentleman who appeared to possess the full confidence of my father!

One day, when M. Emilhaud called upon my mother, he brought with him a Spanish general, named Miranda. While these gentlemen were in the drawing-room, conversing with my mother, I had occasion to pass through the antechamber; but no sooner had I entered, than I started suddenly. I thought I saw Salicetti standing before me. Never was resemblance more striking, except that the individual whom I for a moment mistook for Salicetti, was not quite so tall as he. The man was a Spaniard, in the service of General Miranda.

By chance I mentioned this resemblance, without thinking it a matter of any importance. However, it happened to suggest a lucky idea to my mother. "We are saved!" she exclaimed. "It will be hard, indeed, if we cannot find in all Paris a man five feet six inches (French) high, with a face like General Miranda's servant." My brother, Salicetti, and Madame Grétry were immediately summoned to hold a council. "I must look out for a valet," said my mother; "and when I find one who *will suit me*, I will take him to the section to get a passport. Having got possession of the passport, I can easily find a pretence to quarrel with my valet, and if I turn him off with a month's wages, he will no doubt be very well satisfied." My mother clapped her little hands at the thought of this stratagem. She was quite overjoyed; but, alas! a scene speedily ensued, which changed all her happiness to grief and horror.

Meanwhile the trial of the prisoners came on. They had been brought to Paris, and the special court-martial appointed to try them, held its sittings in the Rue Neuve-des-Petits Champs. Salicetti was the only one who had escaped the grasp of justice; and, urged by his anxiety, my brother was constantly on the road from our hotel to the Rue Neuve-des-Petits Champs, during the short time that was expended in deliberating on the fate of the unfortunate men. One day he returned home dreadfully agitated. He had witnessed an awful scene. Romme, Soubrani, Duroi, Duquesnoi, Goujon, and Bourbotte, were condemned. During their trial they had exhibited the most admirable fortitude, feeling, and patriotism. The conduct of Romme, in particular, is said to have been sublime.

When sentence was pronounced on them, they surveyed each other calmly and serenely; and on descending the grand staircase, which was lined with spectators, Romme looked about as if seeking somebody. Probably the person who had promised to be there had not the courage to attend. "No matter," said he, "with a firm hand this will do. *Vive la Liberté!*" Then drawing from his pocket a very

large penknife, or perhaps it might more properly be called a small poniard, he plunged it into his heart, and, drawing it out again, gave it to Goujon, who, in like manner, passed it to Duquesnoi. All three fell dead instantly without uttering a groan. The weapon of deliverance, transmitted to Soubrani by the trembling hands of Duquesnoi, found its way to the noble hearts of the rest; but they were not so fortunate as their three friends. Grievously wounded, but yet alive, they fell at the foot of the scaffold, which the executioners made them ascend, bleeding and mutilated as they were. Such barbarity would scarcely have been committed by savages.

My brother stood so near Romme, to whom he wished to address a few words of friendship and consolation, that the blood of the unfortunate man dropped upon him. My brother's coat was stained with the scarcely cold blood of a man, who, only a few days before, was seated in the very chamber, perhaps in the very chair, in which Albert was then sitting. The appearance of Salicetti inspired nothing but horror; indeed, I could not bear to look on him, so much did I dread his aspect. Without any consideration for my brother's feelings, he made him repeat, over and over again, the dreadful details of the tragedy he had just witnessed.

Bonaparte had gone to Saint-Maur to spend a few days. He was in the habit of going there occasionally, though I do not know to whom. I have since put the question to Junot, who declared he knew nothing of the matter, and added that Bonaparte was very reserved on some subjects. When informed of the horrible catastrophe detailed above, he expressed the genuine emotions of his heart; and in spite of all that Madame Bourrienne says,* I maintain that at this period he was a very feeling man. Bonaparte had in general a bad delivery; I mean to say, he was not eloquent in his manner of expressing himself. His concise style took from his language that air of courtesy, or, at least of elegance, which is indispensable to the most ordinary conversation. The fact is, he was only eloquent at moments when his heart expanded: then it was, as the fairy legends say, that pearls and rubies dropped from his mouth.

The present was one of those occasions; and the unfortunate men who had just suffered, found in Bonaparte an admirable panegyrist. Far different was his language towards Salicetti, Fréron, and all those who, he said, wanted to renew the reign of terror. The mention of these names led him to speak of himself, and of his blighted hopes, and his misfortunes. "Yet I am only twenty-six years old," exclaimed he,

* See Bourrienne's Memoirs of Napoleon.

striking his forehead, "only twenty-six." He then regarded my mother with a look so melancholy, that she said, after he was gone, "When I think on that young man's unhappiness, I almost reproach myself for what I have done for his enemy."

CHAPTER XV.

Salicetti's proxy—We procure our passports—Our departure for Bordeaux—The first post—Generous letter from Bonaparte—Salicetti's ingratitude—Our arrival at Bordeaux—Difficulty of obtaining a vessel for Salicetti—We proceed to Cette—Salicetti sails for Genoa—Our arrival at Montpellier.

We had above thirty applicants for the valet's situation, but none of them would do. When any one presented himself who did not possess the requisite personal qualifications, my mother immediately sent him about his business. What trampling there was up and down the staircase of the Hotel de la Tranquillité! At last an overgrown boy, named Gabriel Tachard, made his appearance. He bore, it is true, no resemblance to Salicetti, yet we thought he might pass very well for his proxy at the section. He was a stupid fellow, who would not certainly have remained in my mother's service a week, but he possessed the conjoined recommendations of being exactly five feet six, with black eyes and hair, a straight nose, round chin, and a sallow complexion, and slightly marked with the smallpox. The next quality to be combined with all these was the right age, or at least the semblance of it; for Salicetti was, I believe, at that period thirty. However, we went to the section, my mother, myself, Mariette, Gabriel Tachard, and Madame Grétry, who was to answer for her lodger.

We were supplied with passports, and all returned pleased, my mother and myself at the prospect of leaving Paris, Gabriel at having, as he thought, obtained a good place, and Madame Grétry at getting rid of her lodgers; for, spite of its name, her hotel had been one uninterrupted scene of tumult ever since Salicetti had, by dint of gold, obtained permission to make it his hiding-place.

For the last eight days my mother had given out to her friends that my father expected her at Bordeaux. She now received another letter, enjoining her instant departure. In consequence, she determined to set off in two days. "You do well to go," said Bonaparte, taking her hand, and looking at her significantly; "and yet you were wise in not going sooner." "Why so?"—"Oh, I cannot tell you now;

but you shall know before you return to Paris."—"But I cannot wait; you know that we women are curious."—"Well, you shall know the reason. At what time do you set out?"—"I do not exactly know; but I suppose about eleven or twelve to-night, in order to avoid the heat. It is best in hot weather to travel by night, and sleep by day."—"Exactly so: an excellent thought that. Well," continued he, "you shall know my little secret when you arrive at Lonjumeau."—"And why at Lonjumeau?"—"It is a whim of mine," replied he.—"Well, be it so; but I must tell you *en passant*, my dear Napoleon, that you are a sad gossip."

While this conversation was going on our dinner hour arrived, and Napoleon stayed and dined with us. During dinner he said to my mother, "I wish you would take me with you on this journey. I will go and see my mother while you are settling your business at Bordeaux and Toulouse; I will then rejoin you and M. Permon, and we will all return together to Paris. I am quite idle here, thanks to that villain who has ruined me. I am now ready to be any thing—a Chinese, a Turk, or a Hottentot. Indeed, if you do not take me with you, I shall go to Turkey or to China. There the British power may be most effectively injured by a commercial treaty with the Turks or Chinese." He then began to talk on politics with my brother, and in less than an hour's time the Emperor of China was converted to Catholicism, and the grand calao was superseded by a minister of justice.

At length the day of our departure arrived. Several of our friends came to take leave of us, and, among others, Bonaparte. He stepped up to my mother, and taking her by the hand, said, in a low tone, "When you return, think of this day. We may perhaps never meet again. Ere long, my destiny will lead me far from France; but, wheresoever I go, I shall ever be your faithful friend." My mother answered him that he might, at all times, reckon on her friendship. "You know, my dear Bonaparte," she added, "that I look upon you in the light of my Albert's brother." Our friends departed; post-horses were procured, and Madame Grétry, though already munificently rewarded, was promised besides a considerable compliment when Salicetti should have embarked. As to the valet, my mother dismissed him with a month's wages in advance, to his infinite satisfaction. Salicetti then assumed the name of Gabriel Tachard, under which he was to travel into the south of France.

We set out. Salicetti seated himself on the box of my mother's travelling berline, and we got out of Paris without any other delay than that occasioned by the examination at the barrier. The postillion, on the promise of something to drink, brought us with the speed of

lightning to the Croix de Berny. As we were about to start again, the first postillion from the Paris post came to the door of the coach and asked for citoyenne Permon. My mother asked him what he wanted? "I have a letter for you," said he.—"You surely are mistaken," said my mother; "it cannot be for me."—"No," rejoined the man; "I do not mistake, if you are citoyenne Permon." At that instant the recollection of the words of Bonaparte flashed across my mother's memory. She took the letter, and offered the bearer an assignat of five francs; but he refused to accept it, saying, that he had been already paid by *the young man*. At the season of the year at which we were travelling the nights were short; my mother's curiosity was not, therefore, kept long in suspense; daylight soon enabled her to peruse the letter. The handwriting neither of us knew. I have since, however, learned that it was Junot's. This very singular epistle places the character of Napoleon in a light from which his enemies have often sought to exclude it. It was couched in the following words:

"I never like to be thought a dupe. I should seem to be one in your eyes, if I did not tell you that I knew of Salicetti's place of concealment more than twenty days ago. You may recollect, Madame Permon, what I said to you on the first of Prairial. I was almost morally certain of the fact; now I know it positively.

"You see then, Salicetti, that I might have returned the ill you did to me. In so doing, I should only have avenged myself; but you injured me, when I had not offended you. Which of us stands in the preferable point of view at this moment? I might have taken my revenge; but I did not. Perhaps you will say that your benefactress was your safeguard. That consideration, I confess, was powerful. But alone, unarmed, and an outlaw, your life would have been sacred to me. Go, seek in peace an asylum where you may learn to cherish better sentiments for your country. On your name my mouth is closed. Repent, and appreciate my motives.

"Madame Permon, my best wishes are with you and your child. You are feeble and defenceless beings. May Providence, and a friend's prayers protect you! Be cautious, and do not stay in the large towns through which you may have to pass. "Adieu."

The letter had no signature. My mother, after having read it, remained for some time absorbed in profound reflection. She then handed it to me, desiring me in Greek to read it to myself. I was thunderstruck. The look which accompanied the few words my mother said to me in Greek, sufficiently indicated on whom her suspicion

lay; and, I confess, I could not help sharing it. I looked at Mariette, who rode in the carriage with us. She was pale, and her eyes were red with weeping. I had observed that she had been singularly low-spirited, and sighed frequently during the whole of the journey. I was convinced my conjecture was right.

We stopped to breakfast. I think it was at Etampes; and my mother showed Salicetti the letter. He read it over and over, at least ten times. At length he exclaimed, "I am lost! I am lost! Fool that I was, to trust to a woman's prudence!"—"Salicetti," said my mother, suppressing her irritation, "you, yourself, have been the only imprudent person in this affair; and your unjust reproach is a compliment to us; I mean to my daughter and me; for you must rely very confidently on our generosity, when you can venture to reward us thus for all that we have done for you." Before my mother had ended her reply, Salicetti already repented of his foolish exclamation. He very humbly asked our pardon. He then said he had heard us express some suspicion of Mariette. "Never mind, never mind," said my mother, "you ought rather to admire the noble conduct of Bonaparte, it is most generous!"—"Generous!" repeated Salicetti, with a contemptuous smile. "What would you have had him do? Would you have wished him to betray me?" My mother looked at him steadfastly, and then said: "I do not know what I would have him do; but this I know, that I should wish to see *you* grateful."

I may here mention, that Mariette was really the guilty party. Bonaparte's servant was her lover; his master profited by this circumstance; and the present of a gold cross induced the poor girl to betray a secret which might have compromised the safety of the whole house. As to my mother, her fate was certain.

When we had passed through Tours, Salicetti travelled inside the berline. As we drove along, we heard nothing but imprecations against the Convention, and all those who had wished to bring back the reign of terror. The people were in a state of great excitement. "Heavens!" said my mother, "if you were known here, what would become of us!" We had good reason for alarm in several parts of our journey; but, at length, we arrived in safety at Bordeaux. There, to our great surprise, instead of finding my father, we found only a letter from him, in which he informed us that he was obliged to depart for the country; but that his friend M. Emilhaud would attend my mother; and he gave her his address, that she might send for him on her arrival.

In a quarter of an hour afterwards, M. Emilhaud was with us. We learned from him that my father had made unavailing inquiries for a

vessel that would convey a passenger to Italy. None would start for the space of a fortnight. Ships were going to the United States, to St. Domingo, and to England; but Salicetti neither could nor would go any where, except to Genoa or Venice. My mother was in despair. Next day, however, Laudois, my father's *valet de chambre*, came to us. He informed us that my father had ascertained, that at Narbonne or at Cette, a vessel would sail for Genoa, and several for Venice. He had, in consequence, made an arrangement with the master of a yacht, to convey us up the Garonne as far as Toulouse, and from thence, by the canal to Carcassonne. The carriage could be taken on board the yacht; and from Carcassonne we should only have to travel a few leagues to reach Cette or Narbonne. My father thought this mode of travelling much safer for us than by land, on account of the rigid orders that had every where been issued. Salicetti was quite of my father's opinion; and with the assistance of Laudois, we were soon on board the yacht, and sailing up the Garonne.

We soon arrived at Carcassonne, and from thence reached Narbonne; but here we found no vessel going to Italy. We proceeded to Cette; and there we learned that two vessels were about to sail, the one in two days, for Trieste, and the other, that same evening, for Genoa. The captain of the latter vessel, which, singularly enough, was named the *Convention*, informed us, that he should be under weigh at nine o'clock; and, as the wind was fair, he should not be long in reaching his destination. Salicetti was inclined to wait for the vessel bound for Trieste, but my mother would hear of no further delay. She observed, that the wind might not be fair for Trieste on the day appointed, and that it was best to take advantage of the favourable breeze that was blowing that evening.

We sat down to dinner; and when we had ended our repast Laudois and the servants of the inn conveyed the baggage of the fugitive on board the vessel. Salicetti stepped up to my mother, and, taking both her hands in his, said:—"I should have too much to say, Madame Permon, were I to attempt to express my gratitude by words. As to Bonaparte, tell him I thank him. Hitherto, I did not believe him capable of generosity; I am now bound to acknowledge my mistake. I thank him." He jumped into a little boat with the captain of the Convention, and was soon on board the vessel which was to convey him to the shore where he hoped to find refuge rather than hospitality. We slept that night at the inn at Cette; and next morning, after breakfast, we set out for Montpellier. On our arrival there, I discovered that death, emigration, and civil discord, had committed melancholy ravages in that city.

CHAPTER XVI.

Couder's invitation to my father—Salicetti's letter to my mother—Madame St. Ange—Her present to Bonaparte—Trading speculation—Bonaparte and Bartolomeo Peraldi.

I HAVE several times mentioned that my poor father's health had suffered from the miseries of the Revolution. His feelings and his interests were alike wounded. The vexations he had suffered brought on a serious illness, which was augmented by the state of seclusion in which he chose to live. My mother was accustomed to mingle with the world, and her quick perception soon enabled her to discover that my father's situation was not without danger.

Couder, the procureur of the commune, whom I have already mentioned as a worthy honest man, warned my mother of the disagreeable reports which were in circulation at Toulouse respecting my father. "It is said," observed Couder, "that he is ill of the aristocratic fever; I denied the truth of the report, and contended that citizen Permon was a staunch republican. I know very well," replied he, smiling significantly, "that that is not quite true; but there is no harm in a little falsehood sometimes. However, if you will take my advice you will force citizen Permon a little more into society. If he would do me the honour to accept a place in my box at the theatre. If . . . ." Here Couder was a little embarrassed. "Generous man!" cried my mother, as she shook the honest shoemaker's rough hand, "generous man!—yes, we will come to your box; I am sure Permon and I will feel honoured by your kind offer."

"Charles," said she to my father, as soon as the procureur had left her, "do you know what Couder has been saying?" and she related the conversation which had taken place, without forgetting the proposition about the box. My father turned red and made no reply. But when my mother pressed him for an answer, he shrugged his shoulders and with a bitter smile, said, "What a question! What would you have me do? Citizen Couder (and he laid a great emphasis on the word *citizen*) summons Citizen Permon to the bar of his box. We must of course go; that is better than to be dragged to a dungeon by gendarmes; I have only that alternative. I believe this is a second Thirion

Oh Marie, Marie, you might have spared me this insult!" My mother burst into tears. "Charles," she exclaimed, "you view this matter in a wrong light; you misconstrue the intentions of your friends. Do you believe that I would have listened to an invitation which bore the least appearance of insult to you?"—"Doubtless; my dear Marie," exclaimed my father, impatiently interrupting her, "let this man make your shoes, but speak to me no more about his box. I am tired of this," said he throwing himself upon his couch. There the conversation ended; and it may be supposed that my father did not go to the theatre.

Couder was told that my father was ill, and he received the excuse without appearing hurt. Had he listened to the dictates of wounded pride, he might have done us a great deal of harm.

Salicetti often wrote to my mother. Shortly after the scene I have just described she received a letter from him, which showed that he had heard my father was hostile to the government. "Be on your guard, dear Signora Panoria," he said, "I hear that plots are being secretly and silently organized. They say the Royalists are about to rise. Certainly, I am far from suspecting citizen Permon of engaging in any conspiracy, for *I have pledged my word for him.* But others, dear citizen, will suspect that his wish to remain secluded arises from the desire to conceal some culpable design from scrutinizing eyes. Prevail on him to mix a little more with society; you always had an attractive house. Why should not your drawing-room at Toulouse be as it was in Paris?"

My mother showed this letter to my father, who at length saw the danger of exciting towards us the attention of suspicious authority. My mother knew already almost every body in Toulouse, and our home was speedily one of the gayest in the town. By a singular chance, my mother found in Toulouse one of her cousins, from Corsica, whom I used to call my aunt. Mademoiselle Stephanopoli had married M. de St. Ange, a distinguished naval officer, who having quitted the service at the breaking out of the Revolution, purchased at St. Michel's de Lunez, near Castelnaudary, an ancient chateau, formerly belonging to the Polignacs. There he resided with his wife and seven lovely children. Madame de Saint-Ange and my mother were delighted to meet again. Mademoiselle Stephanopoli was, like my mother, the friend of Lætitia Bonaparte. "Well, Panoria," said she, one day, "you see one of Lætitia Ramolino's sons has made his way in the world. That young man is likely to become a general of division. I confess that I should not have expected it, for Joseph was the one I thought would raise up the family. And the Archdeacon——"—"Oh! do not mention the Archdeacon," exclaimed my mother, "I was tired of hearing

his name before we left Corsica."—But, *figlia mia*," replied my aunt, who was as lively as a girl of fifteen, "though the Archdeacon is no favourite of yours, he is nevertheless a person of great importance in the Bonaparte family. I think with him that Joseph is the flower of the flock. He is so handsome and so well bred. Napoleon is downright ugly, *figlia mia;* as stupid as a mule, and very ill-behaved—though he is your *protégé*, *figlia mia!*"—"Ah, cousin," replied my mother, "I see, he has done something to offend you, and like a true Corsican, you will not forgive him." My aunt laughed. The fact was, Bonaparte had offended her only a few months previously. I will relate how.

At that period almost every one endeavoured to increase the little fortune they might have saved from the wreck. Few were such fools as to be too proud to do this. My aunt found that she might earn some money by transmitting to the ports of Provence, goods for the Corsican market, and bartering them for others. Some time after the siege of Toulon, she sent to Marseilles cloth and linen to be shipped for Calvi. Her agent, however, wrote to acquaint her that the English maintained the blockade with such vigilance, that he was unable to effect the transmission of the goods. "Take my advice," added he, "and dispose of your goods either at Toulon, at Antibes, or at Nice. There are troops at those places, two-thirds of whom, to my knowledge, have not shirts to their backs. Your cloth is good in quality and reasonable in price;* therefore it will sell well. You know General Bonaparte; write to him, and you will, I make no doubt, realize fifty per cent. profit."

My aunt saw that the project would answer; she therefore addressed a letter to Bonaparte, which she took care to write in Italian, sprinkled here and there with a few Corsican words, with the view of reminding him of his country and his friends. This done, she sent the packet, under the care of an old domestic of her father, who had settled in the environs of Marseilles.

This man was a Corsican, named Bartolomeo Peraldi. He knew all the Bonaparte family, and, of course, Napoleon among the rest. The General's epaulettes did not intimidate Peraldi, and having delivered to him the letter from the Signora Catalina, he seated himself without any ceremony. Though it was early in the morning, and in the midst of winter, Bonaparte was up and dressed, booted, spurred, and ready equipped to mount his horse.

* It was made in the Chateau of St. Michel; my aunt and cousins spun the hemp and the flax.

Bartolomeo, who surveyed the General with a scrutinizing eye, remarked that Bonaparte's countenance underwent a sensible change whilst he read Madame St. Ange's letter. First an ironical smile played over his features, then his forehead lowered into a frown, and surveying Bartolomeo, he said, "What is all this nonsense?" These words were spoken in French, and in so high a tone, that it seemed he wished them to be heard by two officers who were in the next apartment. Bartolomeo perceived Bonaparte's design, and felt a little nettled. "*Signor Napoleone,*" he replied in Italian, though he could speak French very well, "*non capisco niente a tutto; voi sapete, che in Corsica noi altri poveri diavoli non parliamo che il nostro* patois, *come lo chiamano quì. Fatemi dunque il favore di parlare la nostra cara lingua.*"*

Bonaparte surveyed the man with a look of surprise. "I left Corsica too young to be able to express myself easily in Italian," said Napoleon, turning on his heel; "besides, I see no necessity to speak your *patois*, as you rightly term it, for Signora Catalina tells me in her letter, that you have been living for fifteen years on the coast of Provence."—"*Si, Signor,*" replied Bartolomeo.—"Surely, then, you can speak French," said Bonaparte, with impatience. "What do you mean by this insolence, fellow?"

Peraldi was now a little confused, but speedily resuming his confidence, and putting on his red and blue bonnet, which he had taken off on his entrance, he addressed Bonaparte in the following words: "*Non è bisogno di tanto far la quadra, Signor Napoleoncino; chè penso bene che mi volete dar la burla di chiamarmi così. Ma basti! che risposta darò alla Signora Kalli?*"† Bonaparte darted at him an inquiring glance.—"*Si, Signor; la Signora Catalina, la Signora Kalli, è medesima cosa. In somma, Madama di Saint-Ange. Cos' ho da dire?*"‡ "Know you the contents of this letter?" demanded the General, pointing to my aunt's epistle, which lay on the table at his side. Bartolomeo nodded assent. "Then," rejoined Bonaparte angrily, and in a very loud tone, "you are more impudent than I thought you. Here," continued he, addressing the officers in the next room, "this fellow has brought me a packet from one of my countrywomen, who

* "Signor Napoleon, I do not understand you. You know that in Corsica we poor devils speak only our *patois*, as you call it here. Do me then the favour to speak to me in our dear native tongue."

† "There is no need for all this jesting and calling me such names, M. Napoleoncino. Tell me what answer I am to take to the Signora Kalli."

‡ "Yes, sir, the Signora Catalina and the Signora Kalli are both the same. In short, Madame de Saint-Ange. What am I to tell her?"

wants me to get some trumpery cloth sold to the Republic. It is true she allows me a commission. Here, pray read the letter, citizens;" so saying, he took my aunt's letter, to which there was attached a small bit of paper, with patterns of the cloth and linen, and their prices marked. "You see," continued he, "that she offers me the piece marked No. 2, as a bribe, and if she seduce me, it will not be, as you perceive, by the splendour of the present." The two young officers laughed immoderately when they looked on the pattern, which was coarse and brown, and scarcely fit for soldiers' shirts. I cannot conceive what my poor aunt was thinking of, when she offered such a present to Napoleon. "Begone," said he angrily, to Bartolomeo; "it is lucky for you that you are only the bearer of this impudent message. Begone, I say."

"*Me nè vado, me nè vado. Benedetto Dio! Che fuoco! E perchè! perchè la brava Madama di Saint Ange gli mandò qualche povere misure di tela per farsi una mezza dozzine di camicci!** *Eh!* I have seen the day, and not long ago either," continued he, all at once changing his language, and speaking in good French, "I have seen the day when the half of this piece of cloth would have been gladly accepted by your mother, General Bonaparte, to make shifts for your sisters, though now they have the finest that can be procured in Marseilles—and not much to the credit of one of them." These last words he muttered between his teeth, and then withdrew.

Napoleon was afterwards sorry for having shown so much ill-humour in this foolish affair. I am sure he never pardoned Bartolomeo Peraldi for the lesson he gave him before two officers, who, as they did not belong to his corps, conceived they had no reason to keep the secret.

* "I am going, I am going! Good God! what a piece of work; and all for what! Because good Madame de Saint-Ange has sent him a few ells of cloth, to make him half-a-dozen of shirts."

CHAPTER XVII.

The fair of Beaucaire—Atrocities committed in the south—Mutilated women—Short stay at Bordeaux—Decline of my father's health—Return to Paris—Our hotel Rue de la Loi—Domiciliary visit—The envoy of the section and Bonaparte—My father's illness—Bonaparte's daily calls on my parents—Commotions in Paris—The Convention and the Sections—The 13th Vendémiaire—Bonaparte at my mother's on the 14th, and their conversation—Death of my father.

Tarascon and Beaucaire are, as every body knows, separated only by the Rhone, and the houses of the two towns line either bank of the river. On seeing those narrow streets, those houses with high gothic gables, those windows with small sashes and close lattices, the irregular pavement formed of large flints from the river, you fancy yourself in the middle ages; for there is nothing about Beaucaire that reminds you of the age in which we are living.

The fair of Beaucaire is one of the most celebrated in Europe; it is on a par with those of Frankfort and Leipzig. Its originality is one of the causes that draw thither so many customers. The merchant of Mossoul and Bagdad there sets up his booth beside the manufacturer of London. The trader of Astracan repairs thither to deal with the weaver of Lyons; and the pearlfisher of the coast of Coromandel does business with the jeweller of Paris, through the medium of the garlic merchant of Marseilles. This may appear extraordinary at first sight, but it is nevertheless a fact; and whoever has been to the fair of Beaucaire will recollect the immense heaps of garlic.* The sum put into circulation for this commodity alone is estimated at upwards of six hundred thousand francs, or about twenty-four thousand pounds; at least, so I have been assured by the inhabitants of the town.

Had I not been formerly at the fair of Beaucaire, I could not say that I knew any thing about it, for this year was the first since the Revolution had overthrown all the customs of this kind; accordingly, signs of it were to be seen in the singular arrangement of the shops and goods. From the fear with which they displayed their stuffs and

* They are from fifteen to twenty feet high, and proportionably wide at the base.

exhibited their precious stones, you would have imagined that they dreaded a reaction, and were afraid lest their merchandise should become the property of others without the formality of a sale.

The south was actually in such a state as to excite great uneasiness in those who were merely travelling through it, and who could not hope for any aid from justice and the laws, since both were then absolutely powerless, in case they were attacked by one of those unruly parties which drenched the earth with blood by their quarrels and combats, and by assassinations. These parties assumed all colours; all watch-words were alike to them, and the most atrocious cruelty, the most refined horrors, if I may be allowed the expression, presided over these acts of cannibals, under pretext of avenging the province for the evils inflicted by the days of terror. They fancied that with blood they could wipe away blood: strange baptism! Women, aged men, and children, had been thrown from the tops of the towers of the castles of Tarascon. In a cavity formed by the rocks, a little below the town of Beaucaire, we saw the mutilated bodies of two women, whom the current had carried into that cavern. There they remained, and the wind, at times, wafted from the spot a stench that made one sick at heart.

We stopped at Beaucaire no longer than was necessary to see the singular assemblage which the fair brought together. On this occasion, to my great regret, the *tarasque* was not paraded about as usual: it was justly apprehended that, at a moment when popular effervescence had reached the highest pitch, this procession might be attended with fatal consequences. The precise origin of the *tarasque* is not known, and the manner in which it is conducted throws no light upon this ceremony: still, like the beast of the Gevaudan, it must have had for its primary cause the destruction of some mischievous and dangerous animal. The remembrance of it is thus perpetuated at Beaucaire: an immense machine of wicker-work, covered with oil-cloth, and held together by large strong hoops, is shaped like a dragon, or some other fantastic beast; this machine, from twenty to twenty-five feet long, is filled by a party of young men appointed by the town, when the ceremony of the *tarasque* is decided upon. It was an honour to be admitted into this number. When they were in this strange sort of vehicle they set off, and, darting away at full speed, run about the town, upsetting every thing before them. Woe to the blind and the slow-motioned whom they encounter—they are sure to be thrown down. I saw this exhibition a few years afterwards, and I must confess that I fancied myself among a people of maniacs. It is seldom that it is not productive of serious accidents.

On leaving Beaucaire we returned to Bordeaux. The news which my mother received from my father gave us so much uneasiness, as to prevent our compliance with the wishes of several of our friends, who earnestly begged us to go to Marseilles, to Avignon, and to Arles. We returned by the same road we had come, stopping only at Toulouse and Castelnaudary, whence we proceeded to my aunt Saint-Ange. We found her still a model for her sex; her virtue had so respectable a character that you were forced to admire it, and this feeling was experienced by all who approached her. My mother, as I have observed, was tenderly attached to her; but, as she herself said, laughingly, she could never come up to her, if she must, for that purpose, rise at four in the morning, and eat leg of goose more than four times a-year. "If your virtue could permit you to rise at nine, and not eat so much salt, I could accommodate myself to it well enough, cousin; if you will agree to that, I will come hither with Loulou, and we will be your best workpeople."—"*Altro, altro, figlia mia*," replied my aunt, lifting my mother as she would have taken up a feather. "Let us each go on in our own way."

Dear and respectable woman! I saw her subsequently, when I dwelt in a palace. "Are you happier now than when you went with your cousins to strip the mulberry-trees, on St. Michel's hill?" asked she, on seeing me come home at five o'clock, to dress in haste, having scarcely time to kiss my children, and get into my carriage again, to perform what were called duties. I had a place at court.

On leaving St. Michel de Lunez, we proceeded to Bordeaux. My father awaited us at the hotel Fumele, where he had provided apartments for us. Prepared as we were by the accounts of Laudois and M. Emilhaud for the change in my father, we were shocked on seeing him. His paleness, his emaciation, his dim eyes, and his tremulous voice, every thing about him indicated a person struck by death. His character had retained that gloomy and melancholy tinge which prevailed in it at Toulouse. The extreme solitude in which he had constantly persisted in living had proved fatal to him.

Our meeting dispelled for a few hours that sullen reverie in which he was always plunged; but he soon relapsed, and seemed to attach no importance to the flight of Salicetti; but, after listening to our narrative of the manner in which we had saved him, he smiled with most expressive bitterness, and said to my mother: "You could do no less than offer him every thing: it was not fit that he should accept, still less ask for any thing." When he was informed of the conduct of Bonaparte, it made such an impression upon him, that he rose from his chair, and paced the room several times without uttering a word,

but with visible emotion. At length he returned to his seat, and taking my mother by the hand, "My dear friend," said he, "this conduct is admirable." This admission was a great deal for my father; for I never knew a person more sparing of commendation. "I said the same thing to Salicetti," said my mother, "and what answer do you think he gave me? 'Would you then have had him deliver me up?' said he to me contemptuously." My father shrugged his shoulders. "I have almost always seen," he said, "that persons who regard noble and generous conduct in others as the simplest thing in the world were themselves the most incapable of it." Such trials it is difficult to explain, and still more to judge of. The man who has no wrong to revenge cannot put himself in the place of another, who has been utterly ruined by one whose fate is in his hands. It is very easy to say, when quietly seated in one's arm-chair, *You think that generous, do you? upon my word I cannot tell why. Now I maintain that, had he acted otherwise, he must have been a wretch.* People talk thus, aloof from passions and resentments, without considering that it is a great, a very great virtue to forgive an injury."

My parents, having finished all their business, left Bordeaux at the beginning of September, 1795, and directed their course towards Paris, with the intention of settling there again. We arrived on the 4th of the same month and alighted at the hotel l'Autruche, Rue de la Loi. My brother hastened to join us as soon as he knew of our arrival. He was deeply grieved on perceiving the state of my poor father, who was so fatigued with the journey as to be almost dying when we reached Paris. M. Duchannois was then our physician. He was sent for; he required a consultation. Two days afterwards my poor father was very ill. A dangerous fever was superadded to his previous sufferings. This was too much.

Bonaparte, apprised by my brother, came immediately to see us. He appeared to be affected by the state of my father, who, though in great pain, insisted on seeing him. He came every day: and in the morning he sent or called himself, to inquire how he had passed the night. I cannot recollect his conduct at that period without sincere gratitude. He informed us that Paris was in such a state as must necessarily lead to a convulsion. The Convention, by incessantly repeating to the people that it was their master, had taught them the answer which they now made it in their turn. The sections were, if not in open, at least almost avowed insurrection. The section Lepelletier, wherein we resided, was the most turbulent, and in fact the most to be dreaded; its orators did not scruple to deliver the most incendiary speeches. They asserted that the power of the assembled

people was above the laws. "Matters are getting from bad to worse," said Bonaparte; "the counter revolution will shortly break forth, and it will at the same time become the source of disasters."

As I have said, he came every day; he dined with us and passed the evening in the drawing-room, talking in a low tone beside the easy-chair of my mother, who, worn out with fatigue, dozed for a few moments to recruit her strength, for she never quitted my father's pillow. I recollect, that, one evening, my father being very ill, my mother was weeping and in great tribulation. It was ten o'clock. At that time it was impossible to induce any of the servants of the hotel to go out after nine. Bonaparte said nothing. He ran down stairs and posted away to Duchannois, whom he brought back with him, in spite of his objections. The weather was dreadful; the rain poured in torrents. Bonaparte had not been able to meet with a hackney-coach to go to M. Duchannois; he was wet through. Yes, indeed, at that period Bonaparte had a heart susceptible of attachment!

Meanwhile we became more and more alarmed every day by the dangers which manifested themselves around us. Paris rang with the tumult of the factions, which drew the sword, and each hoisted its standard. Against the Convention, then the only real authority, were arrayed the sections, which for some days past had declared war against it. Our section in particular was in full insurrection. Paris resembled a garrison town. The sections had a hostile and even military attitude. At night we heard the sentries calling to and answering one another, as in a besieged town: the strictest search was made for arms and ammunition; and the section was furnished with lists of all the men capable of bearing arms. This measure even occasioned a distressing scene of which our house was the theatre.

On the 2nd of October, at two in the afternoon, my father was dozing a little. He had been much exhausted from the effects of an emetic, and we had taken the greatest precautions to prevent his being disturbed by any noise. The doors were all at once thrown open, and three men, talking loudly, stamping with their feet to make some one hear, and having the manners of porters, entered the apartment, followed rather than conducted, by the master of the hotel, who was a worthy, excellent man. "What a deal of ceremony!" exclaimed one of these wretches with horrid oaths; "and why cannot we go into this room?"—"Because there is a sick person in it," said my mother, coming forward to meet him, and shutting the double door of my father's bed-room, for it was necessary to spare him any emotion of this kind. "And who is this sick person?" inquired the same man, with an inflexion of voice which showed that he did not believe a word that

was said. "My husband." "Your husband. And why," said he, turning over the leaves of a stitched book, which he carried with him, "has not your husband given in his name to the section? He is in fact inserted in the list of arrivals at the hotel, but we have not seen him. What is the meaning of this conduct, at a moment when the nation needs all its defenders?"—"And pray who are you," asked my mother, "who come thus to annoy my family? Do you belong to the Convention?"—"I have probably sufficient authority to talk to you as I do: but answer my question, and tell me why your husband has not been to the section?"

My mother was going to cut him short when the master of the hotel made a sign which restrained her. "My husband was so ill on his arrival," replied she, "that he took to his bed immediately, as the master of the house can certify." The keeper of the hotel confirmed my mother's assertion, adding some civil words. The man of the section then looked at the book. "Why I see," said he, "that he arrived on the 28th of Fructidor (September 15) that is nineteen days ago. What sort of illness is it? I should have had time to die and come to life again three times over; but that is nothing to the point; where is this citizen Permon? I must see him."—"I have already told you that he is ill, citizen."—"It is no time to be ill, when the country itself is in danger. Come, open the door."—"You are either a madman or a monster," exclaimed my mother placing herself before the door of my father's room. "Wretch, stir not a step further, or the consequences be upon your own head."

At this sharp address, the sectionary man receded a few steps: my mother's look must have frightened him at least as much as he had done her. While he hesitated, my mother told me in Greek to go immediately through the other room to my father, and endeavour to counteract the effect which this noise must have made upon him. I found my father much disturbed at the tumult which he had heard; the very cries of the sentries, after dark, had already alarmed him. The nurse, who had not dared to leave him, told me that for above a quarter of an hour he had been wanting to know what this noise was about. I told him that it was a man belonging to the section, who had come to set him down in the lists of the national guard, but that on being informed of his illness, he had desisted. I was induced to say so, because I heard no further altercation. My father looked steadfastly at me. "Is that quite true?" he asked. Knowing that a true account of this scene would be liable to cause a fatal crisis, I answered in the affirmative, and my mother's maid, who heard the whole, came in and supported me. My father did not believe it. I heard him

utter the words, "Wretches! my poor country!" At length he asked for my mother. I went to fetch her, but in what a state did I find her!

For some years past my mother had been subject to nervous paroxysms, of a character the more alarming, inasmuch as she never lost her consciousness, but continued in a dreadfully convulsed state for one or two hours. At such times she disliked to have any body about her. On reaching the drawing-room, I found her all in tears, and in one of the most violent spasms. General Bonaparte was with her, endeavouring to soothe her: he would not call any one, for fear of alarming my father. I hastened to bring a draught, which my mother always took in these fits, and which immediately calmed her. I rubbed her hands, I took her to the fire, and she was soon able to go to my father, who began to be extremely uneasy because she did not come.

General Bonaparte told me that on his arrival he found her on the point of attacking the assistant of the section, to prevent his entering my father's chamber: fortunately there was a double door. "I should be glad to spare your mother such scenes," said he, "I have not much influence: nevertheless, when I leave you, I will go myself to the section; I will see the president, if possible, and settle the business at once. Paris is in a violent convulsion, especially since this morning. It is necessary to be very cautious in every thing one does, and in all one says. Your brother must not go out any more. Attend to all this, Mademoiselle Laurette, for your poor mamma is in a sad state."

This was a dreadful night for my father. The disease made rapid progress, increased as it was by all that he heard, and that we could not keep from his knowledge. The next morning the drums were beat in the section Lepelletier; it was impossible for us to deceive him in regard to that sound, with which he was but too well acquainted; and when M. Duchannois called to see him, he no longer concealed from us the danger of his situation.

My poor father perceived it before M. Duchannois had uttered a word: no doubt he felt it too. Be this as it may, he desired to see M. Brunetière, and M. Renaudot, his notary. They were sent for. The streets were already very unsafe, and those gentlemen were not to be found. M. Brunetière was not in Paris, and M. Renaudot was from home. The tumult became very great at dusk: the theatres were nevertheless open. Indeed, we are a nation of lunatics!

On the morning of the 12th, Bonaparte, who had called according to custom, appeared to be lost in thought: he went out, came back, went out again, and again returned, when we were at our dessert. I recollect that he ate a bunch of grapes, and took a large cup of coffee.

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"I breakfasted very late," said he, "at———.* They talked politics there till I was quite tired of the subject. I will try to learn the news, and if I hear any thing interesting I will come and tell you." We did not see him again. The night was stormy, especially in our section. The whole Rue de la Loi was studded with bayonets. General d'Agneau, who commanded the sections, had called to see some one in the next house to ours, and one of the officers who were with him had expressed the most hostile disposition. Barricades were already set up in our street, but some officers of the National Guard ordered them to be removed. The National Guard was the principal force of the sections. Its grenadiers and its chasseurs, shopkeepers, and a few private individuals belonging to the party, these were the elements opposed to the troops of the line commanded by experienced generals, such as Brunne, Berruyer, Montchoisy, Verdier, and lastly Bonaparte.

On the morning of the 13th my father was very ill. It was impossible to expect M. Duchannois: our gratitude was the more ardent when we saw him arrive. He stayed nearly an hour with us: in anticipation of what might happen, he left directions as to what was to be done in case he should be out of the way when wanted; but he did not conceal from my brother and myself the effect which the events in preparation were likely to have on our unfortunate father. "A few days ago," said he, "I began to have fresh hopes; but the affair of the day before yesterday, of which he was informed by his nurse (the silly creature had related it to him after my departure, for the purpose of diverting his mind), has brought on the fever again with redoubled violence. I dare not indulge the hope that he will be insensible to the commotion about to take place."

For some hours we flattered ourselves that matters would be adjusted between the Convention and the rebels; but, about half-past four, the firing of cannon began. Scarcely was the first discharge heard before it was answered from all quarters. The effect on my poor father was terrible and immediate. He gave a piercing shriek, called for assistance, and was seized with the most violent delirium. To no purpose did we administer the draughts prescribed for him by M. Duchannois. All the scenes of the Revolution passed in review before him, and every discharge that he heard was a blow as if it struck him personally. What a day! what an evening! what a night! Every pane of glass was broken in pieces. Towards evening the section fell back upon our quarter: the fighting was continued almost under our windows; but when it had reached Saint-Roch and particularly the

* I believe it was at Bourrienne's, but I am not sure.

Théâtre de la République, we imagined that the house was tumbling about our ears.

My father was in the agonies of death: he cried aloud, he wept. Never, no never, shall I suffer what I did during that terrible night! When we heard barricades forming in the Rue de la Loi, we gave ourselves up for lost. Patroles passed to and fro in all directions: they belonged to all parties; for in truth on that disastrous day there were more than two. We were forced to tell my father all. We had at first thought of passing it off as a festival, as salutes of rejoicing. As he was exceedingly debilitated by his long and painful illness, we should perhaps have made him believe this, but for the indiscretion of his nurse: in short, he knew all. I loved my father with extreme affection; I adored my mother. I saw one expiring from the effect of the thunders of the cannon, while the other, extended on the foot of his death-bed, seemed ready to follow him.

Next day tranquillity was restored, we were told, in Paris. It was then that we could perceive the havoc which a few hours had made in the condition of my father. Was tranquillity possible there? Nothing could redeem the life destroyed. M. Duchannois came in the morning. My father wished to speak to him alone. He then desired my mother to be sent in. Suddenly I heard a violent scream. I ran to my father's chamber: my mother was in one of her most dreadful nervous paroxysms. She motioned to me to call Josephine, her maid, to take her away. Her face, always so beautiful, was quite distorted. Till that day she had flattered herself: her hopes had just been utterly destroyed.

I can scarcely give any account of the 14th. My father's state, which hourly grew worse, left me no other faculty than that of suffering and trying to impart a little fortitude to my poor mother. Towards evening Bonaparte came for a moment; he found me dissolved in tears. When he learned the cause, his cheerful and open countenance suddenly changed. "I should like to see Madame Permon," said he. I was going to fetch my mother, who entered at that moment; she knew no more than I, how important a part Bonaparte had played on that great day. "Oh!" said my mother weeping, "they have killed him. You, Napoleon, can feel for my distress. Do you recollect that, on the first of Prairial, when you came to sup with me, you told me that you had just prevented Barras from bombarding Paris? Do you recollect it? For my part," continued she, "I have not forgotten it."

I never knew what effect this address had on Bonaparte; many persons have alleged that he always regretted that day. Be this as it

may, he was exceedingly kind to my mother in these moments of affliction, though himself in circumstances that could not but outweigh all other interests: he was like a son, like a brother.

My poor father languished for two more days. We lost him on the 17th of Vendémiaire.* To me he was more than a father: he was a friend, such as friendship very rarely furnishes, indulgent without weakness. My brother was overwhelmed with grief. He too had lost a friend still young in my father. He had been educated by him, and in fact owed him a large debt of gratitude for having been so brought up. As for my mother, she was long inconsolable, in the real signification of the word: she had that affection for my father which causes one to mourn sincerely the loss of the person who has been the object of it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

My mother's house in the Chaussée d'Antin—Great change in the situation of Bonaparte—Ammunition—Bread—Dreadful dearth—Charities bestowed by Bonaparte—The dead child, and the mason's widow—Comparison between former fashions and those of the republic.

My brother, as soon as he was certain of our definitive return to Paris, had set about seeking a house, where we could all live together, and where we might be able to accommodate my sister when she should come to Paris. All these plans were destined to be cruelly frustrated. As soon as our new habitation was ready, my mother hastened to leave the Hotel de l'Autruche, to escape the painful recollections which are inseparable from a residence in a place where a distressing event has recently occurred. The house to which we removed was situated in the Chaussée d'Antin; it was the small hotel, or rather the small house (every body knows that all the houses in this part of the Chaussée d'Antin were nothing more, anterior to the Revolution) of M. de Varnachan, formerly a farmer-general; it was commodious, and its small appearance was a recommendation at a time when all were striving to make as little show as possible, and to conceal their wealth.

We now learned with astonishment the good fortune which had befallen Bonaparte. My mother, absorbed by her grief, had not a

* Eighth of October, 1795.

thought to bestow on any singularity which the conduct of the young General might present when compared with his own words; she even saw him again without having the will to remind him of it. For the rest, a great change had taken place in Bonaparte, and the change in regard to attention to his person, was not the least remarkable. One of the things to which my mother had a particular dislike was the smell of wet dirty boots put to the fire to dry; to her this smell was so disgusting, that she frequently left the room, and did not return till the boots had been thoroughly dried and removed from the fire; but this was followed by another, namely, the creaking noise produced by the dry sole, to which I have also a great antipathy. Now, in those disastrous times when it was a matter of luxury to ride in a hackney-coach, it may easily be conceived that those who had but sufficient to pay the price of a dinner, did not take great delight in splashing others, but retained sufficient philosophy to soil their shoes or boots by walking. My mother admitted the justice of the remark, but she nevertheless held her perfumed handkerchief to her nose, whenever Bonaparte placed his little feet upon the fender. He at length perceived this, and being at that time exceedingly afraid of displeasing my mother, he would prevail upon our maid to brush his boots before he came in. These details, which are nothing in themselves, and present no remarkable feature, become interesting when we recollect the man to whom they relate.

After the 13th of Vendémiaire (4th October), soiled boots were out of the question. Bonaparte never went out but in a handsome carriage, and he lived in a very respectable house, Rue des Capucines.* In short he had become an important, a necessary personage, and all without antecedent, without noise, as if by magic; he came every day to see us, with the same kindness and the same familiarity: sometimes, but very rarely, he brought along with him one of his aides-de camp, either Junot or Muiron; at other times his uncle Fesch, a man of the mildest manners and most even temper. One of the persons who came very often with Bonaparte was named Chauvet. I do not recollect precisely what he was, but this I know that Bonaparte was very fond of him, and that he was a man of gentle disposition and very ordinary conversation.

At this period, famine prevailed in Paris, in a greater degree than any where else: there was a real want of bread, and other kinds of

* M. de Bourrienne is mistaken. The house which was long the head-quarters of the division is by the side of the house which he mentions in the Rue des Capucines. Marshal Mortier lodged there while he commanded the division.

provisions began no longer to find their way to the city. This was the effect of a plan of insurrection. The distress was dreadful. The discredit of the assignats increased with the general misery. Labouring people ceased to work, and died in their garrets, or went and joined the bands of robbers and vagabonds, which began to collect in the provinces. In Paris itself we were not free from them.

Bonaparte was at that time of great assistance to us. We had white bread for our own consumption; but our servants had only that of the section, and this was unwholesome food; it was not eatable. Bonaparte sent us daily some ammunition loaves, which we very often ate with great pleasure. I know not what Madame de Bourrienne means, when she talks of a circumstance connected with a loaf of this sort, which happened at her house; but this I can affirm, because Bonaparte thought fit to associate me with himself in the good which he did, that, at the period in question he saved more than a hundred families from perishing. He caused wood and bread to be distributed among them at their own homes: this his situation enabled him to do. I have been charged by him to give these bounties to more than ten unfortunate families which were starving. Most of them lived in the Rue Saint Nicolas, very near our house. That street was then inhabited only by the most indigent people: whoever has not ascended to their garrets can have no conception of real wretchedness.

One day, when Bonaparte came to dine with my mother, he was stopped, on alighting from his carriage, by a woman who held a dead infant in her arms. It was the youngest of her six children. Her husband, a slater by trade, had been accidentally killed, three months before, while at work on the roof of the Tuileries. Nearly two months' wages were due to him. His widow could not obtain payment. She suckled, but grief, and afterwards want, had dried up her milk. Her poor little infant had just expired; it was not yet cold. She saw a man, whose dress was covered with gold, alight at our door almost every day, and came to ask him for bread, "that her other children might not share the fate of the youngest," she said; "and if nobody will give me any thing, I must even take them all five and drown myself with them."

This was not an unmeaning expression, for suicides were then daily occurrences; indeed nothing was talked of but tragic deaths. Be this as it may, Bonaparte that day came into my mother's with a look of sadness, which he retained all dinner-time. He had, for the moment, given a few assignats to the unhappy woman. After we had left the table, he begged my mother to cause some inquiry to be made concerning her. I undertook the office. All she said was true; and

moreover this poor mother was an honest and virtuous woman. Bonaparte, in the first place, obtained payment of the arrears due to her husband, and a little pension was afterwards granted to her. Her name was Marianne Huvé. She lived for a long time near our house. She had four girls, whom she brought up like a good mother. Two of them frequently came to do needlework for us: they always expressed the most profound gratitude for the *General*, as they called him. If I have been so particular in this story, which is of little importance in itself, it is for the purpose of exhibiting this fact in opposition to that recorded by Madame Bourrienne, with reference to a dinner at her house, at which Bonaparte and his brother Louis were present.

I shall not draw the portrait of Bonaparte in this place: I shall describe him by and by, as I have seen him. At that time he was not a mysterious being to any one: therefore, I shall speak of him apart from all influence, and from all prejudice. For the rest, there were, in my opinion, two quite distinct persons in him; and I hope to make the reader comprehend and adopt my way of thinking on this point. But to proceed.

It was some time before we were quite settled. My mother was quiet enough when she was in furnished lodgings, and a mere bird of passage, as it were, in a town; but when a permanent establishment was in question, she became of all women the most difficult to please. She had formed a plan for furnishing her house, half Asiatic, half French, which was the most delightful of inventions. She had already written to Leghorn for the carpets. Notwithstanding my youth, my brother talked to me on a subject which could no longer be put off. This was our situation: it was frightful. The seals were removed; my father's papers were examined; nothing was found. My father had left absolutely nothing. "Left nothing!" said I to my brother: "and the money carried to England?" "There is no memorandum of it, no traces whatever. My father, since he came to Bordeaux, always paid for every thing; he had money for current expenses. On removing to Paris, he did not say a word to Brunetière. My mother, as you well know, never talked to him about money matters. As for me, if he said nothing about them in England, he was not more communicative here." My mother was my first thought. "Good God! Albert," said I, "she will not survive it: this state of destitution will put an end to her life!"

My brother and I then agreed to conceal from my mother, at least for some time, the dreadful state of our affairs. We had still something in the Great Book, and some ready money. My brother had

also some of his own, given to him by my father, that he might make the most of it. At that period, every body tried this method of making money. "Bonaparte is attached to us," said my brother; "he will get me an appointment. All that I earn shall be for my mother and you; but, for the present, let us conceal from her what has happened; she has no need of new afflictions."

I have already said, that I had had no childhood: a new life of surprising occupations, very different from those which ought to have enlivened my youth, now opened before me. It is impossible to form an accurate notion of what I went through, from the death of my father to the day of my marriage. All children are fond of their mother. Who is there but feels affection for her who gave him life? If any such exist, they are unnatural monsters! But there is a more tender, a more exalted sentiment, and it was this that my brother and I felt for my mother. We adored her, in the literal signification of the word: we paid her all sorts of delicate attentions, which we took delight in devising. We wished to spare her every trouble, every uneasiness; we rejoiced at her joy, we sorrowed at her sorrow.

Brought up in Corsica, ignorant even of the existence of the articles of luxury which then belonged to the female toilet, my mother was in a sort of intoxication at the time of her coming to France. My father, who was dotingly fond of her, experienced that high delight which is felt in bestowing on the woman one loves, all that can flatter her taste and inclinations. He enjoyed her surprises as much as she did herself, and studied to multiply them. She lived, therefore, in a continual enchantment, especially as my father spared her the trouble of superintending the household: it was he who managed every thing: as for her, he only wished she might amuse herself. On her arrival in France, her ignorance of the language and customs of the country rendered her unfit to undertake the duties of mistress of a house: indeed, she was disqualified for them by habit.

When the political troubles broke out, and my father proposed to place his fortune beyond the reach of danger, he spoke to my mother, in confidence, on the subject. My mother received the communication in like manner, without comprehending any thing of the matter; only, at my father's death she made sure that, after the payment of my sister's dowry, we should have a decent fortune left; but as she had brought no dowry herself, she did not expect any share in the division of the property. "My children," said she to us, "I had nothing when your father married me; to him I owe every thing; of course, all is yours. Only," added she, with her winning smile, holding out her arms to us, "you will give me a place by your fireside."

It was no very easy matter to complete my mother's establishment. She would not have thought herself fitly and properly lodged had she not possessed a number of accessories, unknown at the present day, notwithstanding the catalogue of gewgaws which people agree to call curiosities. Removed to France, at the conclusion of the reign of Louis XV., my mother had received a new existence amidst numberless luxuries, which had become for her wants of a second nature. Never had the French been more inventive than at that period: never had all sorts of gratifications of sense been so multiplied, in order to surround woman with their refined elegance. We fancy that we have made improvements in this way, and we are egregiously mistaken: a lady who had an income of forty thousand livres, fifty years ago, lived better than one at the present day who expends two hundred thousand. All that she then had about her cannot be enumerated: there was a profusion of charming trifles, the very uses of which are lost, and for which we have no substitutes. The establishment of a lady of fashion never comprised fewer than two *femmes-de-chambre*, and almost always a valet-de-chambre for in-door service. A bath was indispensable, for an elegant woman did not pass two days without bathing; and then there were perfumes in abundance: the finest cambrics, the most costly laces for every season were on the toilet, or in the amber-scented baskets, in which the articles requisite for the toilet of a wealthy female were in the first instance deposited. This folly extended to every thing. The furnishing also constituted a material item in the expenses of a woman. The apartments were expected to be very cool, very fragrant with flowers in summer, and very close and warm in winter. As soon as the cold weather set in, Aubusson carpets, several inches thick, were laid down. A lady, on retiring at night to her bed-chamber, found it warmed by a large fire; long draperies fell before the double windows; and the bed, surrounded by thick and ample curtains, was an asylum where she might prolong her night, without danger of having her slumbers broken by the return of day.

The same was the case in regard to articles of common use. The plate, porcelain, linen, were all convenient, and made for the use of people who were connoisseurs in them. The forms were less pleasing to the eye, certainly, but what a difference! For the rest, the experience of every day serves to confirm my opinion: every thing belonging to the last century is again coming into favour, and will, I hope, soon supersede all those Grecian and Roman fashions, which might be very suitable for people living under the beautiful sky of Messina and Rome, but do not harmonize with our gray atmosphere, and our cold north-east wind, which is pleased to blow for nine months in the year.

It has been alleged that every thing has been simplified, that every article has been placed more within the reach of persons of all classes. That is true in one sense; that is to say, our grocer shall have muslin curtains and gilt rods to his windows, and his wife shall have a silk cloak like ours, because that silk is become so slight and so cheap that every body can afford it; but it does not keep any one warm. All other kinds of stuff are in the same predicament. Don't tell me, "So much the better!—a proof of equality." By no means. Equality is no more here than it is in England, than it is in America, than it is any where, since it cannot exist. In consequence, you will have bad taffeta, bad satin, bad velvet, and that is all.

"But, see how comfortable!" say the people, who admire the last chair made by their cabinet-maker, as they do the last of the fourteen or fifteen constitutions which have been given to us during the last thirty years; and they fancy they have said every thing in that word, the meaning of which sometimes they do not understand. Indeed, among all the articles to which that word is applied, a very small number justify the application. All that nowadays deserves it is copied from the fashions of the times of Louis XV., for that period was the true reign of refined sensuality. Under Louis XVI. the Queen rode about on asses, and wore short muslin robes. Experience convinced her that a Queen ought not to ride upon an ass; consequently this was not a fashion to be followed. The French people, in becoming fraternized, ceased to have clean hands; I know not why. They no longer liked good things. Soft, capacious, easy chairs, thick carpets, wide and long draperies, down pillows, all the refinements of the culinary art, which no other nation in Europe but ourselves know any thing about, were good for nothing but to send us to prison; and, because we lived in a fine hotel, situated at the bottom of a court-yard, in order to escape the odious noise and stench of the street, we had our throats cut. This method of treating good manners somewhat disgusted people with them. For some time, therefore, they were abandoned; but now people do justice to bad taste, and those Grecian chairs which break your arms, and those sofas which smell of the stable, because they are stuffed with hay, are consigned to the lumber-room.

It might be objected, "You have not lived in the time of Louis XV.; why, then, do you think his reign so admirable?"—True: I have not even seen so much of Louis XVIth's as to be worth mentioning; but, permit me to observe, that my family, and my mother in particular, had preserved all the traditions with religious accuracy. Faithful servants had saved from the wreck a great number of de-

lightful things, amidst which I was brought up. When my mother was settled in her new habitation, she took delight in arranging every object, and in furnishing her bed-room and drawing-room according to her own fancy. In vain did her upholsterer recommend kersey-mere and muslin; she told him that she did not wish to look like the wife of a contractor to the republic, who made up into furniture the bad cloth which he had not been able to dispose of.

I recollect that long after this time much was said in Paris of a house which Bertaud, I believe, had just fitted up. It was, we were told, the wonder of wonders. People went to see it without being known to the owner of the house. My mother, who was annoyed by this uproar, one day told Admiral Magon, one of our intimate friends, that she was determined to go and see the house in question. The owner was his banker; the thing therefore was easy. We chose a day when the beautiful mistress was absent, and the admiral escorted us. I was lost in astonishment; and I must confess that I admired both the taste and arrangement of all I saw; but my mother had no mercy. She looked round the apartment at those things which constitute the charm of our dwellings, and which are strewed in profuse disorder over the furniture of the room. The value of these objects ought to make you forgive their presence. Thus a Chinese basket of ivory will contain female work. Scissors and thimbles will lie beside it. These must be of gold, surrounded with enamel, or fine pearls. "Rich smelling-bottles, beautiful *nécessaires*, ought all to be here," said my mother. "Of course this room is never inhabited."

When we had reached home, I was astonished, on finding myself in our own convenient habitation, I did not regret the fairy palace which I had just seen. As for my mother, it was never possible to make her confess that this house was an admirable thing. "It is a pretty nick-nack, and that is all," she would reply. But when she was told what it had cost, she was ready to jump out of her easy-chair.

"I would fit up twenty houses like that," cried she, "and you should see what a difference there would be. What matters it to luxury, ornament, and convenience, to all those things indispensable in the furnishing and fitting-up of a habitation, that the furniture of a saloon, in which you never live, should be of rosewood or mahogany? Would it not be better if the money which those arm-chairs have cost, had been employed in giving them a richer cover and a new shape, since they must have one, and in rendering them more commodious, and not likely to break one's arms?"

CHAPTER XIX.

My mother's mourning—Decline of her health—A box at the Feydeau prescribed by the physician—Bonaparte accompanies my mother to the play—Singular overtures of Bonaparte to my mother—He proposes three marriages between the two families—My mother refuses to marry Bonaparte—Stephanopoli, a relative of my mother's—Sharp altercation between my mother and Bonaparte—Definitive rupture—Marriage of Bonaparte—He is appointed to the command of the army in Italy.

My mother's mourning was deep: etiquette required absolute solitude, which preyed daily more and more upon her naturally delicate health. M. Duchannois told her one day that, in the circumstances in which she was placed, decorum might require her not to go into company, but that she ought to take some amusement. In consequence, he recommended her to hire a box at one of the theatres, and to go to it in the most profound incognito; she might listen to good music, surrounded by friends and their attentions, and her soul wrapt in a soft lethargy, would cause her to forget her griefs, for a few hours at least. My mother accordingly took a box at the Feydeau, where she passed an hour or two every evening. Bonaparte never missed coming thither. He was not fond of French music, and, to confess the truth, the notes of Madame Scio and Gavesux-Bouche* were not calculated to give him a liking for it.

About this time Bonaparte had a strange conference with my mother, so strange indeed, that even to this day I cannot suppress a smile whenever I think of it. One day, Bonaparte told my mother that he had to propose a marriage which should unite the two families. "It is," added he, "between Paulette and Permon. Permon has some fortune. (It was not then known that we had found nothing at my father's death.) My sister has nothing, but I am in a condition to obtain much for those belonging to me, and I can get a good place for her husband. This alliance would make me happy. You know what a pretty girl my sister is. My mother is your friend. Come, say yes, and the business shall be settled." My mother said neither yes

* He had a very wide mouth, and was so called to distinguish him from Gavaudan.

nor no; she replied that my brother was his own master, that she should not influence him either one way or the other, and that all depended on his own will.

Bonaparte confessed that Permon was so remarkable a young man, that though only twenty-five, he had maturity and abilities which would qualify him for public employments. Thus far what General Bonaparte said was natural and suitable. It related to a match between a young female of sixteen, and a young man of twenty-five. This young man was supposed to possess an income of ten thousand livres; he had an agreeable person; painted like Vernet, whose pupil he was; played on the harp much better than Krumpholtz, his master; spoke English, Italian, and modern Greek, as well as French; wrote verses like an angel; transacted business with a facility and intelligence which distinguished him among all those who were connected with him in the army of the South. Such was the man whom Bonaparte demanded for his sister, a beautiful creature it is true, and a good girl, but nothing more. To all that I have just said of my brother, might be added, that he was the best of sons, exemplary in his duties as a member of society, as well as in those of a friend, a brother, and a kinsman. I shall perhaps be charged with letting my heart run away with my pen, and listening too much to its suggestions. No, I am not swayed by prejudice; what I say of M. Permon is nothing but the strictest and most scrupulous truth. There are still left many of his friends, of his relatives, to whom he was a great benefactor: let them answer the appeal of such as have not known him, and who wish to learn whether my eulogy of him is true; and let them do it without being restrained by that silly and ridiculous vanity, which frequently prevents people from acknowledging, "There is the man to whom I owe every thing!"

Such then was my brother, when Bonaparte proposed to my mother a match between him and Mademoiselle Pauline Bonaparte, called by her family and all her friends, *Pretty Paulette*. This proposal he followed up by the plan of a second alliance between me and Louis or Jerome. "Jerome is younger than Laurette," said my mother, laughing. "Indeed, my dear Napoleon, you are acting the high-priest to-day; you are marrying every body, even children." Bonaparte laughed too, but with an air of embarrassment. He admitted, that when he got up that morning, a marriage-breeze had blown upon him; and, to prove it, he added, kissing my mother's hand, that he had made up his mind to ask her to commence the union of the two families by a marriage between him and herself, as soon as a regard to decency would permit.

My mother has frequently related to me this extraordinary scene, so that I am as well acquainted with it as if I had been the principal actress in it. She eyed Bonaparte for some seconds with an astonishment bordering upon stupefaction; and then burst into so hearty a laugh, that we heard her in the next room, where there were three or four of us. Bonaparte was at first much vexed at this manner of receiving a proposal which appeared to him quite natural. My mother, who perceived it, hastened to explain herself, and told him that it was she, on the contrary, who in this affair played, at least in her own eyes, a perfectly ridiculous part. "My dear Napoleon," said she, when she had done laughing, "let us talk seriously. You fancy you are acquainted with my age. The truth is, you know nothing about it. I shall not tell it you, because it is one of my little weaknesses. I shall merely say that I am old enough to be not only your mother, but Joseph's too. Spare me this kind of joke; it distresses me, coming from you."

Bonaparte assured her, over and over again, that he was serious; that the age of the woman whom he should marry was indifferent to him, if, like herself, she did not appear to be past thirty; that he had maturely considered the proposal which he had just made to her; and he added these very remarkable words, "I am determined to marry. They want to give me a woman who is charming, good-tempered, agreeable, and who belongs to the Faubourg St. Germain. My Paris friends are in favour of this match. My old friends dissuade me from it. For my own part, I wish to marry, and what I propose to you suits me in many respects. Think about it." My mother broke off the conversation, telling him, laughingly, that for her own part she had no occasion to think any further; but, as to what concerned my brother, she would speak to him about it, and communicate his answer on the Tuesday following—it was then Saturday. She gave him her hand, and repeated, still laughing, that though she had some pretensions, they did not aspire so high as to conquer the heart of a man of twenty-six, and that she hoped their friendship would not be interrupted by this little affair. "At any rate, think of it," said Bonaparte. "Well, well, I will think of it," replied my mother, laughing as heartily as before.

I was too young to be made acquainted with this conversation at the time when it occurred. It was not till my marriage that my mother related to me the particulars here detailed. My brother made a note of this singular affair. Had Bonaparte's overtures been accepted, he would never have become what he afterwards was.

When Junot heard of it, he told us that the thing appeared less

extraordinary to him than to us. About the 4th of October, Bonaparte had got himself appointed to some committee of war: I know not what the appointment was, but it was no great thing. His plans, his schemes, had all one object, one direction, which tended towards the east. The name of Comnene might have a powerful interest for an imagination that was eminently creative; the name of Calomeros joined to that of Commene might be of great service to him. "The great secret of all these matches lay in that idea," thought Junot, and I think so too.

A cousin of my mother, named Dimo Stephanopoli, had shortly before arrived from Corsica, and applied to her to assist him in obtaining employment and promotion. This carries me back to a period, of which I cannot help having a disagreeable recollection, since it involuntarily reminds me of an unpleasant scene, which set Bonaparte at variance for ever with my mother—a circumstance which I cannot forbear deploring, whenever the consequences of this fact, so simple in itself, occur to my memory.

It was, as I have said, on a Saturday that Bonaparte had the conversation which I have just detailed with my mother. On the preceding Wednesday, when my mother had a party to dinner, she had spoken to General Bonaparte in behalf of her cousin Stephanopoli, begging that he would get him admitted into the Guard of the Convention. He was five feet nine inches high (French measure); his head was rather too small for that tall stature, but he had handsome features. In short, there was certainly not a regiment but would have been glad to make such an acquisition. This Bonaparte admitted, when my mother remarked it, on introducing her cousin to him: he promised a speedy and above all a favourable answer.

On Friday, my mother asked the general if he had thought of her recommendation. "You cannot doubt it," replied Bonaparte. "I have the promise of the minister of war: there is but one step more to take, which I purpose doing to-morrow, and then I will bring you the commission." The next day was the unlucky Saturday. My mother asked where was the commission; "for," said she, "I look upon it as *mine*." He answered under the influence of what had just passed between them, and though there was no asperity in his words, still he did not appear to be so well-disposed as on the preceding day.

"Napoleon," said my mother, laughingly, "there are two persons in you at this moment. Continue, I entreat you, to be the man whom I love and esteem, and above all do not let the other get the better of you." Bonaparte was at table at this moment by the side of my mother. He frowned and pushed his plate sharply from him. "Why

be angry?" said my mother mildly. "You mistake the real cause of my anger," replied Bonaparte. "I am angry with myself. This is Quintidi, and nothing done. But rely upon me for to-morrow." Out of delicacy my mother did not insist upon that day, though she had a good mind to do so. The same evening she spoke to my brother on the subject of the morning's conversation. My brother answered *No.* Reasons foreign to these Memoirs prevented his accepting the proposal.

On Monday morning, General Bonaparte called to see my mother: he was on horseback, and surrounded by a numerous staff. He appeared in high spirits, and said a number of amiable and even flattering things to my mother. That very morning, Dimo Stephanopoli had written his cousin a long and ridiculous letter (I beg his pardon), in which he complained bitterly of the delay of his appointment, which he seemed to lay to the charge of my mother. At the moment when General Bonaparte was kissing her hand, and praising its whiteness, she snatched it from his with violence, and asked whether the commission was at last made out. The General replied that it was not, but that it was promised him for the *morrow.*

This was an unlucky expression: my mother would not have been so much vexed by it, if he had not twice repeated it since the commencement of the affair. "What does this mean?" she asked, contracting her two little brows into a frown, and looking at Bonaparte with sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks. "What does this mean? Is it a wager, is it a hoax, or is it ill-will? In that case it would have been much more simple to refuse me at first. I dare say I should have found friends who would have served me."—"Nothing of the kind you have mentioned, Madame Permon," replied Bonaparte; "important business has taken up every moment of my time."—"Every moment of your time! Don't tell me such absurdities. And what can be the important business which prevents you from keeping your word? Is this the custom which you have nowadays adopted in your new military code?" Bonaparte turned crimson, which he was not in the habit of doing. "You are rather too severe, Madame Permon."—"Not half severe enough. You want a good shake, to waken you from the dream into which the grandeurs of your republic have lulled you."

The conversation, which had at first been general, was suspended, and the most profound silence prevailed; both of them were ruffled. Chauvet, who, owing to his friendship for both, could do more than any other to restore peace, made an attempt and addressed two or three words to my mother: but she was in such a passion that she did not hear what was said. She declared that "she felt herself

affronted. Twenty times had General Bonaparte given his word (this was quite true) that the commission had been granted, and that some trivial formality depending on himself was the sole cause of the delay. She had explained to him how important it was, for family reasons, that Dimo Stephanopoli should have his commission. General Bonaparte knew all this, and day after day, promise after promise, the time had run away and nothing was done. Could an enemy have served me worse?" continued my mother, becoming more animated as she spoke. "In this manner he prevented the steps which I might otherwise have taken. I trusted to him, in short, and——" "You are too warm just now, not to be unjust, Madame Permon," said General Bonaparte, taking up his hat to go away; "to-morrow I hope to find you more calm, and consequently more reasonable." Bonaparte approached my mother, and took her hand to kiss it, but she was so irritated that she drew it from him with violence. In this movement she hit him upon the eye with such force as to give him pain. "You cannot make reparation for what is past," said she, haughtily. "What is done, is done; with me words are nothing, actions every thing. *Ma va bene. Ramentatevi che, se non sono Corsa, sono nata in Corsica.*" —"*Questa rimembranza sarà sempre per me cosa gradevole, signora Panoria. Mai non temerò di lei. Dunque la mano e pace.*"* He advanced, and whispered my mother, at the same time stooping to take her hand, "Those young folks are laughing at us. We look like two children." My mother drew back her hand, and folded her arms with a disdainful smile. Bonaparte looked at her for a moment, as if to solicit a change which he evidently wished for. When he saw that she showed no disposition to relent, he made a motion which was rather an expression of impatience than a bow, and hastily withdrew.

"For God's sake," said Chauvet, "don't part thus! Let me call him back, Madame Permon, I entreat you. You have hurt his feelings. It was wrong to talk to him in that manner before his aides-de-camp. See, how slowly he goes down stairs; he expects, I am certain, to be called back." My mother's disposition was excellent, and she had an advantage that is very rare in a woman; when she was in the wrong she would admit it. But whether, at this moment, her self-love was too deeply wounded, or whether she actually thought she was not in the wrong on this occasion, she would not allow Chauvet to call back Bonaparte. "See how obstinate he is, on his side!" said my mother.

* "But fare you well. Recollect that if I be not a Corsican by family, I was born in Corsica."—"The remembrance of that will always be agreeable to me, Madame Panoria. But I shall have no apprehension on that account. Give me therefore your hand, and let us be reconciled."

"He is wrong, but nothing could induce him to recede a single step. Why then would you have me take that retrograde step?" A servant presently came to say that the General wished to speak with M. Chauvet. Go, my dear Chauvet," said my mother, giving him her hand, "go; do not condemn me; I am not to blame."

My brother was absent during this unfortunate scene. Had he been there, I am sure that it would not have happened, or that he would have given a different turn to the affair. When I related the particulars to him in the evening, by desire of my mother (for she could not yet talk of it without being in a passion), he was exceedingly vexed. As for my mother, she was very sorry for the circumstance. She was fond of Bonaparte, as we are fond of a child that we have brought up. In the sequel, the malice of Bonaparte provoked in my mother a feeling of acrimony, which assumed a tint not of hatred, for that she had for nobody, but of decided dislike, especially after the 4th of September, which struck a great number of her friends, and which the public voice attributed to Bonaparte. I know not whether it was the same day or the following that we saw Fesch. His disposition was kind, mild, and extremely conciliating; he was much grieved at this quarrel between my mother and his nephew, and endeavoured to reconcile them: but there were two obstructions, the more difficult to be removed, inasmuch as one of them was known only to my mother and Bonaparte, and the other to himself alone. The latter was perhaps the more important of the two. It arose, as Chauvet had anticipated, from what he had suffered, on finding himself treated like a schoolboy who had just left Brienne, in the presence of officers who as yet knew but little about him. Had there been none present but Junot, Chauvet, or some others, he would have been the first to laugh at a thing which now severely mortified him. The other point, which had also a very active part in the whole affair, was the state of ill-humour and hostility in which Bonaparte had been ever since the preceding Saturday. However, be this as it may, the rupture was complete. We were several days without seeing him: he then called one evening when he knew that we were at the theatre, and at last he stayed away altogether. We learned shortly afterwards from his uncle and Chauvet, that he was going to marry Madame de Beauharnais, and that he was appointed commander-in-chief of the army in Italy. We saw him once more, before his departure, on a distressing occasion.

CHAPTER XX.

Recollections of Toulouse—M. de Regnier, commandant—Introduction of M. de Geouffre to my mother—Mutual passion—Marriage of M. de Geouffre and my sister Cecile—Melancholy presentiments of my sister—Her death—Destruction of our fortune—Count de Perigord, uncle of M. de Talleyrand—Admirable conduct of a valet-de-chambre, during the reign of terror—Decline of my mother's health—Visit of condolence paid by Bonaparte to my mother—Death of Count de Perigord—My brother joins the army of Italy—Journey to the waters of Cauterets—The Pyrenees.

I HAVE mentioned the reasons which induced my mother to receive company during our residence at Toulouse. One day, when she had invited several persons, among whom was M. de Regnier, commandant of the place, one of the most assiduous of our friends, he sent, about half an hour before dinner-time, to excuse himself. He wrote to my mother, that "one of his friends, charged with a mission to him, had just arrived; that he was obliged to do the honours of the staff of the place, and could not leave him." My mother's answer will easily be guessed; she begged him to come and to bring his friend along with him.

"An adjutant-general, a friend of Regnier," said my mother, "that must be some old codger like himself, who will be very dull. Farewell to our plan of music, my young friends" (my brother had just then leave of absence to come to pay us a short visit); "but we have one resource, and that is, to make him play at *reversi*. An old officer of infantry is sure to know how to play at cards, ay, and how to cheat too."

My mother was the more surprised when she saw M. de Regnier followed by a young man of genteel appearance, having a handsome face, and the manners of very good company, which at the period in question was a very uncommon thing. After dinner, the plan of music, so far from being abandoned, was, on the contrary, carried into execution at the request of M. de Geouffre, who was already persuaded that none but celestial sounds could issue from the mouth of my sister.

Since leaving the convent of the Dames de la Croix, my sister had become a charming creature. Her features were not regular, when

examined separately; indeed, there was nothing pleasing in them; but they formed altogether a whole so sweet, so graceful, so much in harmony with the rest of her person, that, on seeing her, it was impossible to help exclaiming, "What a delightful girl!" Large dark blue eyes, with long thick eye-lashes, rosy cheeks, teeth perfectly white, the finest auburn hair I ever saw, a slender elegant figure—these advantages, which are by no means exaggerated, greatly out weighed Cecile's external defects, and caused you to overlook too wide a mouth, too long a nose, and hands and arms too large for her height.

But my sister had, moreover, what is invaluable in a woman, namely, a charm diffused over her whole person by an air of mild melancholy which rendered her adorable. She possessed an excellent temper and good understanding. All these things combined to form a halo, which enveloped that bright sweet face of sixteen, on which you were quite surprised never to catch more than a transient smile. Cecile was a female who would have been distinguished in the world, had it been fortunate enough to retain her.

The day on which M. de Geouffre was introduced, was one of her *smiling* days as we called them. I see her still, notwithstanding the many years that have since fled, dressed as she was on that day. She wore a frock of rose-coloured crape, laced behind, showing to perfection her slender waist, and floating around her like a roseate cloud. The sleeves were tight, and trimmed at the bottom with white blonde, forming ruffles. Her shoulders and bosom, which were delicately fair, were seen through a *fichu* of Chambery gauze, likewise trimmed with white blonde. A pink ribbon, passing through her hair, formed a bow on one side. On seeing her thus attired, it was impossible to avoid being struck by the graceful harmony between her bright youthful face and this costume, equally bright and youthful. It made a deep impression upon M. de Geouffre. In the evening we had music. My sister, a pupil of Herrmann, was an excellent performer on the piano; she played two duets with my brother: she sang, and the evening passed away as by enchantment. M. de Geouffre was not proof against her charms. He became so enamoured of my sister, that before he left our house he felt that his future happiness depended on one of its inmates. M. de Geouffre remained at Toulouse, and forwarded his dispatches by an officer to the head-quarters of General Dugommier, by whom he was sent. He called upon us next day, and again the day afterwards: my mother, who immediately perceived the drift of his visits, durst not say any thing, but she was uneasy. At length M. de Geouffre prevailed upon M. de Regnier to speak for him, though the latter felt extreme repugnance to do so, for he was ac-

quainted with my father's sentiments, and though my mother was infinitely more moderate, yet M. de Regnier did not conceal from his friend the certainty that there would be a tacit agreement between them not to give their daughter to an officer of the republican army. As he had foreseen, my father's first word was a refusal, as well as my mother's.

"And what have you to object against him?" said Regnier: "he is of a good family. I have proved to you that he belongs to the Geouffres of the Limousin; several of that family served in Champagne and Burgundy, and have emigrated. He possesses a good fortune and a fine estate near Brives-la-Gaillarde; he holds a remarkable rank for his age; he is highly respected in the army, and Dugommier promises to do great things for him. He is, besides, a handsome man, which is no drawback in an affair of marriage. Lastly, he is a man of sound understanding. Come, Madame Permon, be persuaded." My mother admitted the truth of all this, but still said *No;* nor did she change her mind. Soon after M. de Geouffre arrived at Toulouse to take the command of the military division. It was General Dugommier who, out of friendship for him, and wishing to facilitate his marriage, thus placed him in a situation to follow up his suit more effectually. Accordingly, when he was at Toulouse, his personal solicitations were joined to those of M. de Regnier. He also interested in his behalf a family with whom we were very intimate, that of Peytes de Moncabrié. Madame de Moncabrié was the first to project a plan which nobody had thought of, how strange soever it may appear, excepting perhaps M. de Geouffre—still it was nothing more than conjecture. This excellent woman wrote immediately to Madame de Saint-Ange, who came without delay. She said nothing to my mother, but watched Cecile. She soon perceived that my sister was attacked by a nervous disease which might prove fatal.

"Panoria," said she one morning to my mother, "when do you marry Cecile?"—"What a question!" replied my mother: "You know perfectly well that I have refused."—"Have you noticed the girl? have you seen how she is altered? do you know that you are accountable for what she suffers?"—"Kalli," said my mother, who was strongly excited, "I leave you to manage your family as you please; let me beg you not to interfere with mine."—"Is that the tone you assume? well, then, I will tell you, with my habitual bluntness, that you are not a good mother."—"Kalli!"—"Yes, you are not a good mother. Send for your daughter; ask Loulou how her sister passes the night, and you will lower your tone a little."

I was questioned. I was obliged to confess that my sister wept a

great deal; but she had so strictly forbidden me to mention it that I had been forced to be silent. My mother burst into tears, in her turn: my sister was called. The fact is, that the poor girl loved as well as she was loved, but she durst not say a word about it before my mother, of whom she was exceedingly afraid, because, though a good mother, she was to her a very severe one. My father was too ill to be talked to on the subject; my brother was far from us; I was too young for such a topic of conversation. Madame de Moncabrié was, in her virtuous kindness, the angel who guessed the secret that would ultimately have killed the poor girl.—"You wish for this marriage?" said my mother: "well then, it shall take place."—Accordingly, in a month, my sister, having become Madame de Geouffre, was settled at the hotel Spinola, the head-quarters of the military division which her husband commanded.

It is difficult to conceive a happiness more profound, more complete, than that of my sister during the first months of her marriage. She was formed to feel it, and accordingly she fully enjoyed it. It was disturbed by one thing only, and that was the idea that her husband might be called from her into the field. It was to no purpose to tell her, that the elevated rank which he held he owed solely to his presence in the field of battle, and to several wounds, which he had got the better of; she replied to it all by tears only, and begged in a timid voice, that her husband would send in his resignation. He demonstrated to her with a smile that the thing was impossible; that his army was engaged in active warfare, and that it would be compromising his honour. At length, peace between France and Spain was signed, and my sister, who was in the way to become a mother, made a fresh attempt, which was more successful. Her husband, who was passionately fond of her, solicited his dismissal with as much ardour as at that time others solicited appointments. All his friends dissuaded him from this step, which in fact blasted his future prospects. It was from this same army of the Eastern Pyrenees that, a few months afterwards, Bonaparte selected the multitude of superior officers, who formed the nucleus of the army of Italy, and all of whom were comrades of my brother-in-law. Such were Augereau, Lanusse, Lannes, Marbot, Bessières, Duphot, Clausel, etc. etc. His destiny would not have been different from theirs: but he yielded to the entreaties of his wife, and they retired to their estate at Objat, near Brives-la-Gaillarde. Thus, at the age of only twenty-four, he returned to civil life, and shut himself out for ever from a career which he had so brilliantly begun.

When my sister left Toulouse she was five months advanced in

pregnancy. At her departure, she asked my mother's blessing in the most affecting manner. She felt convinced, she said, that she should not survive her accouchement. Her presentiment was, alas! but too well founded. My sister was brought to bed towards the end of January, 1795, soon after the death of my father. My brother-in-law had communicated to us this event, which is always attended with apprehensions for a young female who is confined for the first time, with a joy proportionate to his happiness. Cecile had given him a fine boy, and intended to suckle him herself. "My wife is so well," wrote M. de Geouffre, "that she is already talking about carrying her Adolphe to her mother to receive her blessing. She is more charming than ever, with a colour like that of a rose. You may conceive, my dear mamma, the intense joy of all around her, so dearly is she loved." The rest of the letter contained the particulars of the event, which had been fortunate in every respect. It took place on the 23d, and the letter reached us on the 27th of January.

On the 1st of February my mother and I were with my brother, who had the second floor to himself. He had caught a violent cold, and we had dined in his room, that he might not expose himself to the cold air. My mother was seated on his sofa: she had placed my brother in a large easy-chair, and was laughing like a child at the thought that, if my brother was married, as she wished him to be within six months (she had a very good match in view for him), I might also be some time afterwards. "Now the game is begun," said she, "I see no reason why I may not be grandmother to twenty or thirty children." At length she ceased laughing. "Cecile must be a charming young mother," said she with emotion; "I should like to see her in her new functions."

My mother was very changeable in her impressions. When talking of herself as a grandmother, the idea had tickled her so much, that she had laughed till she cried. But the moment her imagination presented to her affectionate soul the picture of the infant who had made her a grandmother, pressed to the bosom of her daughter, and imbibing life at that source, her eyes ran over, and she fell into a kind of reverie, which my brother and I took good care not to interrupt. It was nine o'clock: all was quiet, for at that period equipages were rare in Paris, and our quarter, independently of that, was then very lonely. We all three kept silence, which was broken only by a soft and monotonous tune, which my mother hummed in a low tone: you would have supposed that she was lulling an infant to sleep. She was thinking of Cecile and her little Adolphe. All at once there was a knock at the gate, given with such force as to make us start. My brother

and I burst out into a laugh. "That knock makes me ill," said my mother, clapping her hand to her forehead. "What unmannerly person can it be knocking in that way at this time of night?" We heard the gate shut, and presently heavy steps on the pavement. My brother rang the bell, and a letter, which the postman had just brought, was put into his hand. "Ah!" said Albert, "news from Cecile! It is from Brives, and Geouffre's handwriting."—"Whom can he have lost?" I exclaimed, the black seal of the letter having caught my eye. In asking this question, to which I attached no importance, I raised my eyes to my brother: he was pale, and excessively agitated. "What says Geouffre in that letter?" said my mother, rising, and going up to my brother, whose sudden emotion revealed to her a disaster. "My sister has been ill, but she is better now," replied Albert, in a tremulous tone. My mother snatched the letter, cast her eyes on it, gave a frightful shriek, and sank upon her knees. My poor sister was dead!

None can form any conception of our anguish but those who have lost objects whom they dearly loved, in a manner equally unexpected: neither can language describe or express it. My mother was very ill for several days. The death of my sister would at any time have deeply afflicted her; but at the moment when she had become a mother, at the moment when the tomb had scarcely closed over our father! And then that mirth, those songs, amidst which this death had been announced! Poor mother! she was unhappy, very unhappy; for to all these causes of grief was superadded another, which my brother and I had alone been acquainted with, and which wrung her heart when it came to her knowledge.

Cecile was regretted by all who knew her. The family into which she had been adopted, her mother-in-law, her father-in-law, mourned her like ourselves. She was gentle and pious as an angel; endued with talents, virtues, graces—those attractive charms which are not to be imitated, and which win every one's love. Bonaparte sent the very next day after we heard of this new calamity which had befallen my mother, and called himself to see her. He talked to her in a tone of the sincerest friendship. My mother was so overwhelmed that she could scarcely prevail upon herself to admit him. He set out immediately afterwards for Italy. He was already married to Madame de Beauharnais.

My brother-in-law came almost immediately to Paris. His interview with us was agonizing. My mother felt her misfortune still more keenly when she saw M. de Geouffre. She said to me, when going to bed at night, that perhaps she might not be able to see him again the next day. His presence reminded her of the time when she had with-

stood all soljcitations to unite him to my sister. Cecile loved him, and my mother exclaimed, with tears, "Poor Cecile! thy life was so short, and I have abridged it of six months' happiness!"

M. de Geouffre did not remain long with us. He returned to the Limousin, whither he was recalled by the only interest that was left him. He was impatient to be again with his child, whom he had consigned to the care of his mother. On taking leave of him, we made him promise to bring Adolphe to us very soon.

We had been obliged to apprize my mother that our situation was no longer such as she might suppose it to be. The blow was less painful than I had apprehended. There were in her heart so many bleeding wounds, that it was scarcely affected by matters of that kind. She was perfectly sensible of the necessity of making retrenchments in our household, which had been kept up on too expensive a scale for our almost ruined fortune. My brother, who thought only of our welfare, without caring about himself, resolved to turn his attention to commerce, and had the good luck to succeed in his first speculations. He was about to devote himself entirely to this career, but was afraid to enter into an engagement which would have bound him for fifteen years. He would have been obliged to go to India, to expatriate himself, and leave us without protection. All this deterred him. He thanked our friend Magan, who had procured him this chance of making his fortune, and confined himself to what he was then doing.

My mother had again met with some old friends. The prisons were open ever since the downfall of the directorial *régime*, and people began to breathe with more freedom. We had again fallen in with persons to whom we had bidden a painful adieu. This produced a singular impression, a mixture of delight and uneasiness; and it was a long time before we could relish the satisfaction of seeing them again at liberty. But how was this satisfaction imbittered with regard to many of them! Among these was the dearest of my mother's friends, he whom I loved in my childhood as one loves a grandfather, I mean the Count de Perigord. Having escaped the sanguinary proscriptions, he returned to society without happiness, without joy. He was already far advanced in years, ailing, afflicted with gout, wholly destitute of fortune, and absolutely isolated. His two sons had emigrated. His daughter, the Duchess de Mailly, was dead: there were left behind only a few friends as unfortunate as himself,* and whose deplorable situation prevented them from rendering him any assistance.

* From this number must be excepted the Count de Monchenu, who, having preserved his fortune, did for Count Perigord all that devoted attachment can do for a needy friend.

When we first saw him again, my mother could not help starting with sad surprise. So great was the change that the eye of friendship could scarcely recognise him. There was the same kindness in his tone, but he was no longer the same: his eye was dim, and it was evident that the springs of life were worn out.

How could I say that he was alone! how could I have forgotten a man, as noble as any titled hero, devoting himself to his master's service, and saving his life by his admirable management! The Count de Perigord had in his household a valet named Beaulieu. This man had always been an excellent servant; he proved that interest had not been his stimulus. From the moment that his master was apprehended, all his attention was directed to him. He carried to him whatever he thought would be good for or agreeable to him. In short his devotedness was entire and exclusive.

The Count de Perigord, like all the innocent persons who were then thrown into prison, was persuaded that by wearying the Committee of Public Safety by petitions he should obtain prompt and complete justice. Nothing could be more false than this reasoning, as Beaulieu learned from one of the relatives of the man in whose house Robespierre lodged. Repeated petitions occasioned the death of most of the prisoners. In many instances, the writer had never been thought of. The first petition produced ill-humour; the second aggravated it; and very frequently the wretches brought the poor victims to trial to avoid the annoyance of a third petition.

Beaulieu, on hearing of this mode of rendering justice, determined that his master should not obtain it in that manner. Now, poor Count Perigord was one of the very persons who cherished the conviction that they could get out of prison only by dint of importunity. In consequence, a petition was daily addressed either to *ce bon Monsieur de Robespierre*, or to *cet excellent Monsieur de Collot-d'Herbois*, or again to *Monsieur Fouquier-Tinville*. "How very odd it is!" at length exclaimed Count de Perigord, "nobody answers me. I cannot understand it."

There was a very good reason why his petitions remained unanswered. Beaulieu threw them all into the fire. In this manner he caused his master to be forgotten. He bribed the turnkeys handsomely; and then, as soon as the Count de Perigord began to be known in one prison, he obtained his removal to another. In short, a son could not have shown a more affectionate, and above all, a more active solicitude for his father. When he had the good fortune to recover his liberty, M. de Perigord went to lodge at the house of a friend, M. de Monchenu. Beaulieu was still about him, bestowing on

him the most delicate attentions, and sacrificing for this purpose all that he had. As a proof of the kind disposition of M. de Perigord, one of his servants in livery, a class of domestics whose sentiments are in general less honourable and less elevated, on hearing that his master was again out of prison, went and offered him his services. This man's name was Boisvert. I know not what became of him or Beaulieu at the death of M. de Perigord, which happened shortly after his liberation; but I hope that the Prince de Chalais has duly provided for them; merit so extraordinary has a right to be rewarded.

The Count de Perigord had a club-foot; I do not recollect whether it was so from his birth, or the consequence of a hurt; but there are reasons to believe it was a family defect. He came every Thursday to spend nearly the whole of the day with us, and this was sure to give rise to a smart altercation between him and Beaulieu. He insisted upon coming on foot; Beaulieu would not let him, and told him with truth that he could not. His infirmity, in fact, prevented him from walking. He suffered very great pain.

One day he received a letter from M. de Chalais, who was then in England. He told his father that he was starving, that the emigrants in England were reduced to the extremity of want, and that he was completely wretched. M. de Perigord happened to dine at my mother's on the very day when this letter arrived. The change which it had wrought in him was striking; he had persuaded himself that the account of his son's misery was literally true. During the whole dinner he could not help repeating, "Good God! they are perishing with hunger!" and the viands remained untouched upon his plate. At length, several persons urged that this could not be possible, since he knew himself that M. de Chalais had carried resources away with him. "He may have lost them," said the poor father. The very next day, he learned to a certainty from a person who had returned to France (for there were some who had returned so early), that his son was still rich, at any rate that he possessed property which placed him beyond the reach of want. "The emigrants are not all so well off as he is," said M. de N.

The Count de Perigord was more easy, but a blow had been given to a constitution worn out by the four years of revolution which had elapsed. The death of the King and Queen, the captivity of the young King and the Princess, the misfortunes of the monarchy, which had affected him as family calamities, all this work of destruction had inflicted a mortal stroke; the least shock, therefore, was sufficient to put an end to him. Eight days afterwards the place which he occupied at our table was vacant, and two days later he was no more. His

death was a new calamity for my mother; she fell ill. Her lungs were affected. Sleeplessness, an obstinate cough, slight fever, and other alarming symptoms, induced her to consult a physician: she was ordered to the waters of Cauterets.

Meanwhile my brother received a letter which was destined to produce a great change in our situation. He was summoned to Italy, to take upon him administrative functions. I am sure that Bonaparte was no stranger to this appointment, though he appeared to have nothing to do with it.

The parting was painful. So many misfortunes had burst upon us, so many wounds had been inflicted on the heart of my poor mother, that she dreaded every thing. The simplest step made her apprehend a fatal result. She was on the point of begging my brother not to leave her. Had she been alone, he would, no doubt, not have done so. But no sooner did her eyes rest upon me, than she felt that it was my brother's duty to perform the promise which he had made to my father on his death-bed. My mother, therefore, consented to his departure. I was left alone to attend her; and, notwithstanding my youth, I was also charged with the management of all her concerns. "God will give you the strength and judgment necessary to enable you to perform your noble task, my dear girl," said my brother to me, clasping me in his arms, at the moment of his departure. "Have confidence in God, confidence in yourself, and all will go on well. I will often write to you; and you must inform me of every thing. Whenever my mother shall express a wish which the means I leave you are inadequate to gratify, write to me immediately, and that God in whom I put great faith, will not forsake two children, whose sole aim is the happiness of their mother."

My brother proceeded to his destination, and we, on our part, set out for the Pyrenees. At a later period I revisited those beautiful mountains. I skirted and crossed their long chain; but it was not till my third journey to Cauterets, that I could indulge my ardent wish to explore the mountains which I saw before me. Those noble pine-forests which encircle, as it were, the Vignemale, the loftiest of the French Pyrenees, beheld me pursuing alone the tracks trodden by the caprice of pedestrians.* La Cerisay, Maourat, le Pont d'Espagne, the lake of Gaube, and even Esplemousse, were the favourite points of the excursion which I took with my mother, not on foot (for she was unable

* Queen Hortense made the same tour the year before: her journey has no resemblance to mine. My guides lost their way; but though her tour was not attended with perilous risks like mine, she presented her guides with a gold medal, inscribed, *Voyage au Vignemale.*

to walk), but in the odd vehicle of the country. It is a kind of sedan, formed by a small straw stool, to which are attached two strong poles, and which is covered with white cloth, supported by three very slight hoops; and a small piece of wood, two inches broad for the feet to rest upon, is attached by two bits of packthread. When you are seated in this species of cage, two sturdy mountaineers, hawk-eyed and chamois-footed, carry you off with an agility that is at first alarming. There is something romantic in the velocity with which you are hurried along the brink of a dark precipice, the depth of which the eye cannot measure, or in an ascent not less rapid through an ocean of clouds, to which the sun communicates every shade of crimson and purple.

This impression is indeed very strange. The first moment has something so unusual, so different from our ordinary sensations, that the eyes close, and the hand by a nervous contraction grasps one of the slight arms of the seat. Presently you wish to see where you are; you eye with avidity the very peril of which you felt such dread; and soon, the rapidity of your course, whether descending or ascending, those vivid lights, that moving rainbow which surrounds you, those perfumes which rise at every step of the robust mountaineer on the carpet strewed with thyme and wild pinks over which you are flying, that succession of enchantments, which are natural, and in which you roll, as it were; all this intoxicates and imparts to you an activity of life, a double respiration, which add to existence and augment its happiness.

CHAPTER XXI.

Our return to Paris—The emigrants—Sketches of Parisian society—Public balls and well-known characters—Ball at the Thelusson Hotel—Madame de D. . s—M. d'Hautefort—Madame Tallien—Madame Bonaparte—Madame Hamelin.

My mother's health was nearly re-established when we returned from the waters. Her grief, too, was much softened by change of scene, and still more by the hope of again meeting at Paris a great number of intimate acquaintances, commonly called *friends*, and who, though not real friends, give a peculiar charm to the commerce of life. This charm is unknown to the society of the present day, which is become harsh and sour: none will admit, that, in the daily intercourse

of life, each ought to furnish his contingent of complaisance and affability. Accordingly, we now see none of those assemblages of forty or fifty persons, meeting daily at the houses of five or six of the number. Independently of the pleasures which this way of living afforded, more important advantages resulted from it. A person who possessed no influence always found a support in the company to which he belonged. If you were not swayed by a feeling of good-nature, you were afraid of meeting every day a person whom you had refused to oblige; you would have seen a discontented face. It was therefore obligatory on him who had it in his power, to oblige those about him. I admit that then, as still, there existed abuses, and that many of them originated in favour; but I will ask, if, under a form more rude, more speculative for the parties concerned, less agreeable in its results, there are not at this day, as there were at the time of which I am speaking, immense abuses of power and children of favouritism. If I had time to throw away, I could make out a fine list of obscure names, which the country knows only from their being inserted in patents and grants of pensions.

Be this as it may, when my mother heard of the return of the greater part of her acquaintance, her joy was extreme. France then wore the appearance of tranquillity, and the emigrants returned in crowds, with a confidence which proved very fatal to them a few months later (in Fructidor), but which seemed at that time to be perfectly well founded. The women, in particular, were in a truly communicative enchantment. At length, they again beheld that dear native country, beautiful France, the remembrance of which imparts double bitterness to every land of exile, how hospitable soever it may be. I recollect, that at the first meeting between my mother and Madame Martois,* with whom she had been intimately acquainted, that lady, who had been but two days in Paris, and was still quite overcome with joy at the mere sight of the barriers, threw herself into my mother's arms, burst into tears, and was more than a quarter of an hour before she could conquer her emotion. Her daughter told us that the same thing occurred with all the friends whom she again met: in this there was on her part neither affectation nor acting; it proceeded from an ardent soul, which enjoyed in its plenitude all the

* She was either a Neapolitan or Roman, I know not which: but, having been brought to France when a year old, and married there, she was as much or more attached to it than to her native country. She was a most lovely woman. Still young at the period of her return, she was preparing to enjoy all the happiness which it caused her, but three months after her arrival she died of small-pox, at the age of thirty-four.

happiness attached to the word, *native country*. But, how many disappointments awaited the unhappy exiles, on their return to their native land! Poverty, isolation, death, were the lot of most of them.

One of the most painful situations, and to which I was frequently witness, arose from the difference or rather the diversity of the shades of opinion. These shades produced discord in the most united families. The destruction of principles had led, as a natural consequence, to one of a similar nature in the most ordinary habits of life. Thus all those delightful reunions which formerly constituted the charm of intimate acquaintance, no longer existed, or were poisoned by odious politics, which engendered sharp contradiction, anger, quarrels, frequently terminating in ruptures between husband and wife, brother and sister, and sometimes between father and son.

Such was the picture presented by society in Paris, at the period of which I am now treating, that is, 1796 and 1797. The word *society* was vulgarly used to designate assemblages of persons; but in point of fact there were no social meetings. Private individuals were afraid of appearing wealthy by receiving company habitually, and they contented themselves with frequenting those public assemblages, where, at that time, the best society was to be found. Such was the system adopted, not only in regard to concerts, but also to balls. It would scarcely be believed at the present day, that the most elegant women went to dance at the Thelusson* and the Richelieu† balls; but the most curious thing is, that persons of all opinions, of all castes, were there intermingled, and laughed and danced together in the utmost harmony.

One day at the Thelusson ball, a droll adventure befell Madame D., who sometimes took her daughter with her. Such places necessarily brought into contact persons who not only differed in sentiments, but were mutually hurt at finding themselves together: thus, in spite of the apparently good understanding between them, there frequently occurred scenes, unperceived by the multitude, but extremely interesting to those who were lucky enough to witness, and able to comprehend them.

Madame de D. had arrived very late. The great circular room was quite full, and it was impossible to find two places. Nevertheless, by dint of elbowing and entreaties, these ladies penetrated to the centre of the room. Madame de D., who was not of an absolutely

* At the Thelusson Hotel, at the extremity of the Rue Cerutti, facing the Boulevard, there was at that time an immense arcade. Murat purchased it during the Consulate.

† Held in like manner at the Richelieu Hotel.

timid character, looked about on all sides, to see if she could at least discover one seat, when her eyes encountered a young and charming face, surrounded by a profusion of light hair, with a pair of large dark blue eyes, and exhibiting altogether the image of the most graceful of sylphs. This young female was conducted back to her seat by M. de Trénis, which proved that she danced well: for M. de Trénis invited none to the honour of being his partners, but such as deserved the character of *good dancers*. The graceful creature, after courtesying with a blush to the Vestris of the ball-room, sat down by the side of a female, who appeared to be her elder sister, and whose elegant dress excited the notice and envy of all the women at the ball. "Who are those persons?" said Madame de D., to the old Marquis d'Hautefort, who escorted her. "What! is it possible that you do not know the Viscountess Beauharnais? It is she and her daughter. She is now Madame Bonaparte.* But stay, there is a vacant place by her; come and sit down: you may renew your acquaintance with her."

Madame de D., without making any reply, took the arm of M. d'Hautefort, and drew him, whether he would or not, into one of the little saloons which preceded the great rotunda. "Are you mad?" said she to him, when they had reached the room. "A pretty place, truly, by the side of Madame Bonaparte! Ernestine would of course have been obliged to make acquaintance with her daughter. Why, Marquis, you must have lost your wits."—"No, 'faith! What harm can there be in Ernestine's making acquaintance, or even forming a close friendship with Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais? She is a charming girl, sweet-tempered, amiable."—"What is all that to me! I will never connect myself with such persons. I do not like people who disgrace their misfortunes."† M. d'Hautefort shrugged his shoulders and held his tongue. "*Eh! mon Dieu!* who is that beautiful woman?" inquired Madame de D., pointing to a female who entered the ball-room, and on whom all eyes were instantly fixed. This lady was above the middle height, but a perfect harmony in her whole person took away all appearance of the awkwardness of too lofty a stature. It was the Venus of the capitol, but still more beautiful than the work of Phidias; for you perceived in her the same perfection of features, the same symmetry in arms, hands, and feet,

* At this period Madame Bonaparte was not much known in the world, nor had she been presented at the court of Marie Antoinette. The real fact is, that Madame de D. did not know her.

† The expression was used, that is certain. The whole of the particulars of this ball were given to us by one of the relatives of M. d'Hautefort, who lent his arm to Madame D., and never quitted the ladies the whole evening.

and the whole animated by a benevolent expression, a reflection of the magic mirror of the soul, which indicated all that there was in that soul, and this was kindness. Her dress did not contribute to heighten her beauty, for it consisted of a plain robe of India muslin, with folds in the antique style, and fastened at the shoulders by two cameos; a gold belt encircled her waist, and was likewise fastened by a cameo; a broad gold bracelet confined her sleeve considerably above the elbow; her hair, of a glossy black, was short, and curled all round her head, in the fashion then called *à la Titus;* over her fair and finely-turned shoulders was thrown a superb red cachemir shawl, an article at that time very rare and in great request. She disposed it around her in a manner at once graceful and picturesque, and formed altogether a most enchanting figure.

"That is Madame Tallien,"* said M. d'Hautefort to Madame de D. "Madame Tallien!" exclaimed she; "Good God! how could you bring me to such a place, my dear friend?"—"I defy you to find in all Paris a place where better company is brought together." He then muttered some of the civil things which he had at the service of those who displeased him.

At this moment a very strong scent of attar of roses suddenly pervaded the apartment. A crowd of young men, of the class then called *incroyables*, rushed towards the door to meet a young lady, who had but just arrived, though it was exceedingly late. This female, though she could not but be pronounced plain, nevertheless possessed inconceivable attractions. Her figure was not good, but her little feet danced to admiration. She was dark, but her black eyes sparkled with such expression! Her face beamed with intelligence, and expressed at the same time all the kindness of the simplest person. She was altogether a good friend, and the most amusing of women. Finally, she pleased; she was a toast of the day. All the remarkable men at the ball surrounded her as soon as she appeared. M. Charles Dupaty, M. de Trénis, and M. Lafitte, immediately asked her to dance with them; she answered each with an expression of good-humour and intelligence, smiling in such a manner as to exhibit her ivory teeth; she continued to advance, shedding fragrance throughout the whole room.

Madame de D., who was annoyed by this scent, and who, like all busy-bodies, found fault with what others liked, began to shuffle about

* I have lived at Bordeaux: I have had friends who owed their lives to Madame Tallien. I have been told all the good she has done, and I cannot say too much on that subject. Having never had reason to complain of her, it is therefore but natural that I should praise her.

on the bench upon which she had found a seat, and at length said aloud, "Upon my word, I think that must be either Fargeon's wife, or his daughter.* 'Tis enough to make the strongest man faint."—"It is Madame Hamelin," said M. d'Hautefort. Next day he told us that nothing had amused him more that evening than being first gentleman to Madame de D., and thus having to name the persons who were real bugbears to her. "Madame Hamelin!" she exclaimed, "Madame Hamelin! Come, Ernestine," added she, in a voice tremulous with anger, "put on your *palatine*, and let us go." All that could be said served only to hasten her departure. "And that Marquis," repeated she in a tone of indignation, "to assure me that I should here meet with my former society! Yes, indeed; for this hour past I have been falling out of the fryingpan into the fire. Come, my dear, let us go."

This scene passed a few paces from the bench on which my mother and I were sitting. We were well acquainted with the Marquis d'Hautefort, who was very satirical, and who frequently made us laugh by the account of his adventures at this ball.

CHAPTER XXII.

The army of Italy—Triumphs of Bonaparte—My brother at Massa-Carrara—Lucien Bonaparte and Christine Boyer—Lucien-Brutus and St. Maximin-Marathon—Excursion to Versailles—Adventures of my brother—Elopement of Madame Felice—General Lannes and M. Felice—Rivalship of Lannes and my brother—Leoben and Campo-Formio—Bonaparte at Paris and general enthusiasm—Hatred of the Directory for Bonaparte—Ball at M. de Talleyrand's.

The army of Italy surprised us every day by the prodigies communicated in its bulletins. The Directory, which disliked General Bonaparte, would fain have thrown a veil over the glory of the young hero; but the country, which he had saved from Austrian invasion, the soldiers whom he led to victory, had thousands of voices to proclaim it, and the only resource left to the ridiculous government which we had been silly enough to give ourselves, was to injure him whom it would gladly have thrown down after it had exalted him.

* Fargeon was a celebrated perfumer, before the revolution. His son, who succeeded him, and who lives in the Rue de Roule, is also eminent in the same line of business.

My brother was then in Italy; he had repaired to head-quarters, and Bonaparte had been most kind to him; my brother had carried with him a letter of recommendation from Joseph Bonaparte. "What occasion is there for this letter?" said the General. "Whence arises so great a distrust of yourself?" continued he, looking more seriously at Albert. My brother replied that the slight altercation which had occurred between him and my mother, had caused him to fear that the General would bear it in mind. "You are mistaken," said Bonaparte; "that scene was immediately effaced from my memory. I apprehend, indeed, that Madame Permon bears a much stronger grudge on account of it than I do; and that is but natural," added he laughing; "those who are in the wrong are sure to be most angry."

The very reverse was the case on this occasion, for it was Bonaparte who never forgot that unfortunate altercation. More than ten years afterwards he spoke to me on the subject with asperity. Be this as it may, he was very kind to my brother, received him in the most flattering manner, gave him all the support he could expect, and procured for him a very good appointment.

While General Bonaparte hurried on through Italy from victory to victory, his family was collecting at Paris, and forming a colony there. Joseph Bonaparte, after having been ambassador of the French republic at Rome, had returned to Paris, bringing with him his wife's sister, Mademoiselle Désirée Clery, who was then in the deepest mourning for the tragical death of the brave but unfortunate Duphot, who had been murdered at Rome almost before her face, at the moment when he was going to marry her. Her first grief had abated somewhat of its violence; but there was still enough left to excite much pity. Luckily, she was yet young, and very agreeable.

Lucien announced his arrival. He had just obtained a post, I know not where, in Germany, and he was passing through Paris to see his family, nearly the whole of which was at that moment collected there. At this period Lucien had just been playing a silly trick, at which the General-in-chief, who now considered himself as the head of the family, was excessively mortified. Lucien Bonaparte is a man who, no doubt, has been known to many persons; but few have had the opportunity of appreciating him. I have known him long and intimately, and am capable of drawing his character without flattery or deceit. He was endowed by nature with rare talents: his mind was comprehensive; his imagination brilliant, and capable of estimating fully the characteristics of grandeur. It has been said that he was a man whom reason did not always influence in important affairs; this, however, is not true. His heart was kind, and although some-

times hurried away by his passions, he can hardly be reproached with any serious charge; and as to his conduct towards his brother, the Emperor, it was always honourable.

In 1794 or 1795, Lucien obtained the appointment of store-keeper at St. Maximin, a small village in Provence. At that time, folly was somewhat the order of the day, even with the wisest. It was therefore necessary to sacrifice to this mania of the moment; not that I mean to excuse Lucien's folly, by asserting that he was forced into it; on the contrary, I am of opinion that what he did, he did voluntarily; and I am convinced that he acted not only with his own free will, but even from inclination, when he assumed the name of Brutus, and also changed, while he was about it, the name of St. Maximin into Marathon. Brutus at Marathon did not agree over and above well together; but the names were high-sounding, and that was sufficient.

The village of St. Maximin Marathon is not a magnificent residence. Lucien-Brutus soon found this out, and ennui would have overpowered him, had not love come to his aid. Lucien-Brutus became enamoured, desperately enamoured, of Mlle. Christine Boyer, whose father was at the head of the little public-house of St. Marathon. Lucien was then young, about twenty-three; he was in love for the first time, and he loved an angel of gentleness, virtue, and candour. Christine saw herself adored by an ardent, hot-headed young man, employing against her rustic simplicity all the stratagems, all the resources, with which his short experience of the world had made him acquainted, and which his love taught him to employ skilfully; and Christine was not proof against such an attack. She loved as she was loved, but she forgot not her duty, and Lucien was obliged to marry her in order to be happy; but he loved her too fondly to be aware of all the unpleasant feelings which this alliance was likely to excite in his own family. In fact, no sooner was General Bonaparte apprised of this marriage, than he declared that he would never see the wife, and never meet his brother again. A place was then given to Lucien in Germany, and the young couple came to Paris.

It was at this period that I saw Lucien Bonaparte for the first time, and that I became acquainted with Christine. There are women whose portraits it is easy to sketch. We say that they have large eyes, beautiful hair, a complexion blending the lily and the rose, and that is all. But, is it only on account of her person that a woman is to be valued? Has she not within her divine charms to be described? a profusion of kindness, affection, and love? Such were the qualities that were to be found in the heart of the excellent Christine. I knew her, and no sooner knew than loved her. Subsequently, when I have

seen her surrounded by the touching halo of maternal love, new treasures of tenderness manifested themselves in her, and constrained you to love her still more.

My mother had a great affection for Lucien, and received him as his mother would have done. Christine was welcomed by her with equal cordiality. Joseph, who had then returned to Paris, and whom, in fact, each of the younger brothers considered as the head of the family, opened his arms to the young couple, and they were happy. A few days afterwards they set out for Germany.

During the short stay of Lucien Bonaparte and his wife in Paris, they made an excursion to Versailles, and they allowed my mother no peace till she had consented that I should be of the party. As I had never seen Versailles, I joined my solicitations to theirs and accompanied them. I cannot describe the terrible impression which this widowed and dismantled queen produced upon me. On beholding those vast halls, the immense saloons, stripped and deserted, the dark corridors, and apartments still covered with gilding, apparently awaiting the finishing hand of pomp; all seemed to me so dreary and desolate that, though very young, I retained so vivid an impression of it, that when, in 1821, I went to reside at Versailles, I had a perfect recollection of the feelings produced by the melancholy and scandalous neglect of the residence of Louis XIV. I inquired in what state the palace was, and when I learned that it was precisely what it had been under the Directory, I did not care to enter that royal habitation, wilfully forsaken by its natural guardians: I should have suffered much more from witnessing its forlorn condition in 1821 than I had done in 1796. The garden was the only object of my walk.

Lucien was but a short time absent. I never knew what he had been to do in this tour. His wife had accompanied him, as well as one of her cousins, named Boyer. On their return they lodged in Rue Verte, in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré. Madame Bacciochi (Marianne Bonaparte) also lodged, I believe, in Rue Verte. Madame Leclerc, who had recently come from Milan, where she had been married, took a house in Rue de la Ville-l'Evêque. Louis and Jerome, too young to be left alone, were, the latter at the College of Juilly, and the other with his brother Joseph.* As for the latter, he had bought a house at the extremity of Rue du Rocher, almost in the fields, at least at that time. Since then so many buildings have been erected there, as

* And with his sister-in-law Madame Bonaparte, Rue Chantereine. He lived with both of them by turns. It was about this time that Josephine began to think of marrying Hortense.

every where else, that the site of Joseph's house is now almost in the heart of a new quarter.

The time of which I am speaking is still further removed from us by the rapid progress of events than by that of time. A week then exhibited the spectacle of a vast empire destroyed, an army vanquished and taken prisoners; we were accustomed to such events, and were not content with less. This period is the most glorious in the life of Bonaparte, and that he well knew when he dictated at St. Helena the finest pages of the campaigns in Italy.

The treaty of Leoben was signed, that of Campo-Formio had followed it, the congress of Rastadt was in preparation, when we were informed that General Bonaparte would soon return to Paris. My mother appeared to wait the moment with extreme impatience, I knew not at the time why; but I afterwards learned that the reason was as follows: My brother was agent for the contributions at Massa-Carrara, and had for his colleague M. Gabriel Suchet, brother of the Duke of Albufera. He is a kind, excellent man, a cordial friend of Albert, and became ours too.

My brother lodged at the house of a Monsieur Felice, whose wife was a charming woman. General Lannes, whose division was near Massa, if not at that place, had remarked, as my brother also had done, that Madame Felice was handsome, and that it was not impossible to please her; he therefore took measures to ensure success. But the future Duke of Montebello stormed a town more easily than a woman—even an Italian. My brother played delightfully on the harp, sang likewise, spoke and wrote Italian as fluently as French, and made sonnets and *canzoni* on Madame Felice, not quite equal to Petrarch, and yet so good as to cause the heart of his fair landlady to surrender quietly at discretion; while General Lannes, who was also well aware that it was necessary to form a plan of attack, thought to play off the most irresistible of seductions by relating his battles and his victories; and, to tell the truth, this might have been more than enough to win a heart that was free; but Madame Felice's had struck its colours to all the accomplishments of Albert, and had surrendered more especially to his love, for my poor brother's head was completely turned. At length, one day, the lovers persuaded themselves that they could not live any longer annoyed in this way, on the one hand by a jealous and rejected swain, and on the other, by an Italian husband, whose character was by no means so austere as to make him fret if his wife was fond of any other man than himself. The result of this cogent reasoning was, that they took post and left Massa, trusting to love for the consequences of that measure.

Next morning, when the forsaken husband discovered his forlorn condition, he began to weep, and ran to acquaint General Lannes with his mishap. On hearing it, the general gave such a bound in his bed, as had wellnigh knocked off the canopy. "Gone!" he cried; "gone! and together, say you?"—"*Si, signor generale.*"—"And which way are they gone?"—"*Eh, signor generale, come vuole ch' io la possa sapere?*"*—"*Eh, parbleu!*" replied General Lannes, leaping out of bed, and slipping on his pantaloons, at the same time eyeing Felice with looks of fury, "blockhead that you are! go and find out what road they have taken."

The poor husband sallied forth to make inquiries, and learned without much trouble that the fugitives had directed their course towards Leghorn. As soon as he had communicated this information to General Lannes, "Come along," cried he; "to horse! to horse! *Morbleu!* we shall catch them in a couple of hours. You shall shut up your wife; and as for this Corydon of a Frenchman, who has the impudence to run away with *our* wives, I'll get him removed. Come along, Felice; come along, my friend! Take heart! What the devil ails you? You are as pale as a sheet of parchment."—"*Si, signor generale; grazie tante, grazie tante, farò cuore, farò cuore.*"†

Whilst giving this assurance that he would *take heart*, his teeth chattered like castagnettes, as General Lannes himself afterwards told me. The fact is, that the poor fellow had no stomach for fighting my brother;‡ and that the general had frightened him out of his wits by asking what weapon he would take with him. At any rate, the scoundrel would have done better to fight than act as he did afterwards. General Lannes took the command of the party, and the husband, with his brother-in-law, a cousin, and I know not how many more, marched off under the protection of the banner of General Lannes. "*Ah! cugino Pasquale!*" said Felice to a little cousin; "*cugino Pasquale! che amico! che questo bravo generale! che galant' uomo!*"§

The fugitives were overtaken about mid-day. The stray sheep was carried back to her fold, and inhumanly separated from her companion. I believe that my brother returned to Carrara, and that Madame Felice was removed to another town. Thus far the affair

* "Ah! general, how can I possibly know that?"

† "Yes, general, many thanks; I *will* take heart."

‡ My brother was a first-rate swordsman; my father, a pupil of Saint-Georges, had been his master, as well as Fabien. My brother possessed a formidable advantage—he was left-handed.

§ "Ah! cousin Pasqual, what a friend! what a brave general! and what a charming man!"

had been gay enough; but now this Monsieur Felice, impelled by some demon or other, preferred a criminal complaint against poor Albert. It was this affair, of which I was then ignorant, though my mother knew of it, that tormented her exceedingly. She wished to know if General Bonaparte had any accusatory documents relative to this charge. My mother was always easily affected, and any fears which she might reasonably entertain were sure to be doubted by her imagination.

Bonaparte arrived at Paris. It would be very difficult to convey even a slight idea of the enthusiasm with which he was received. The French people are fickle, not very susceptible of constancy in their affections, but accessible to the sentiment of glory. Give them victories and they will be more than content; they will be grateful. This was clearly shown when General Bonaparte arrived at Paris, at the period I am speaking of. It was a real triumph, to which nothing was wanting but the ovation; however, it had wellnigh cost him dear, as the following fact will serve to prove.

The Directory, like all authorities that are too weak and impotent to produce and to direct, though it was called the *Executive Directory*, regarded with jealousy, which soon generated into hatred, that feeling of love and gratitude manifested by the French people for their young hero. A single movement seemed to set in action those five men, not one of whom was capable of comprehending Bonaparte. Incapacity, corruption, and an unbounded ambition, disguised by republican masks, were the elements of the power which then ruled us, and which desired no glory but that of its immediate creatures. Bonaparte had emancipated himself since he had been sent to Italy, and his laurels and those of his army were *personal property*, as much as any thing can legally be.

Barras left him unmolested to enjoy his renown; Moulins durst not venture to call to mind that he had ever been a general to run a race of vanity with him. Roger-Ducos thought on all points like a good-natured man, as he was; and Sieyes, habitually reserved, as every body knows, did not deem it necessary to let loose his tongue expressly to anathematize. According to this view of things, what I have said above will appear rather contradictory. But to proceed to my *proof*.

On this occasion, one of the five Directors governed singly the sentiments of the other four. He possessed not more talent, but more intelligence, than his colleagues, and boundless ambition, though he declared that he had none—a mere figure of speech, to which nowadays no value whatever is attached. This man was Gohier. At this period we had every day the bulletin of the directorial interior, because M. Brunetière, our friend and my guardian, was equally intimate with

Gohier and visited him daily. My mother sometimes inquired the reason of his aversion for General Bonaparte; for, in regard to him, she was rather amusing. She assumed the right of saying what she pleased about him, but she did not like others to attack him, and the malicious things which M. Brunetière heard said of Bonaparte, and which he reported to us every day, roused my mother's anger against him and the Directory, which she cordially detested.

From this time the hatred of Gohier for Bonaparte displayed itself in all his words and actions. He would have patronised to his prejudice the most incapable of men; that is to say, a recommendation from Bonaparte would have been a sufficient reason with Gohier for excluding the person so recommended from an appointment, had it depended on this Director. There certainly was a positive and primary cause of this hatred, which the 18th Brumaire strengthened and rendered implacable. What was that cause? I believe simply this—Gohier would have thought it highly conducive to the welfare of France, and more particularly to his own, to get rid, with the aid of the society of the Manège, of the four puppets at the head of the government with him, and to make himself president, not of the Directory, as it was on the 18th Brumaire, but of the French Republic. This scheme the eagle eye of Bonaparte had detected. He had warned Sieyes, most probably, and the admirable subtlety of the latter had foiled the plans of Washington the younger. Gohier was not deficient in talent, but that talent, which might have some merit before a tribunal, was reduced to a cipher in the extraordinary situation which fortune had permitted him to attain. For one may now venture to speak out: on looking at the list of the Directors of that period, if we except Carnot, a virtuous man, and a man of eminent abilities, and Sieyes, who, though his political career has not been quite straightforward, yet possessed merit, what were the chiefs who steered our poor vessel? Gohier felt, therefore, that he was superior to the Directory as it was composed after Fructidor; and as the sentiment of inferiority never presents itself to any man, he thought that he might seize the reins, which all other hands had suffered to fall and even to trail in the dirt. His plan was guessed, I repeat; and this was the cause of his truly violent hatred against Bonaparte. The reader will presently be convinced of this, when I relate the conversation which M. Brunetière had with Gohier after the 18th Brumaire.

Be this as it may, had Bonaparte's vanity been ever so great, it must have been satisfied; for all classes joined, as I have said, to give him a cordial welcome on his return to his country. The populace shouted "Long live General Bonaparte! Long live the conqueror of

Italy, the pacificator of Campo Formio!" The shopkeepers said, "May God preserve him for our glory, and deliver us from the maximum of the Directors." The higher class, *ungagged* and *unbastilled*, ran with enthusiasm to meet a young man, who in a year had been from the battle of Montenotte to the treaty of Leoben, and from victory to victory. He may have committed errors, and even grave ones, since that time, but he was then a colossus of great and pure glory.

All the authorities gave him magnificent entertainments: the Directory exhibited itself in all its burlesque pomp of mantles and hats with feathers, which rendered the meeting of the five members of the supreme power sufficiently ridiculous. But in other respects the *fêtes* were fine, and they had in particular, the charm attached to things which are supposed to be lost, and which are recovered. Money circulated, and the result of all this was, that every body was pleased.

But one of the most magnificent entertainments, and above all, one of the most elegant in its magnificence, was that given by M. de Talleyrand, at the office for foreign affairs. He always displayed admirable skill in the arrangements of the entertainments which he gave: indeed, when a man possesses good sense, he shows it in every thing he does. He then resided at the Galifet Hotel, Rue du Bac, and though the rooms were too small for the company assembled there that evening, the *fête* was admirable. All the most elegant and distinguished people then in Paris were there. My mother was absolutely bent on going. She was not quite well; but when she was dressed and had put on a little rouge, she looked enchanting; and I can affirm that I saw that night very few women who surpassed her in beauty. We were both dressed alike, in a robe of white crape trimmed with two broad silver ribbons, and on the head, a garland of oak-leaves with silver acorns. My mother had diamonds, and I pearls. That was the only difference between our dresses.

In the course of the evening, my mother was walking through the rooms, arm in arm with M. de Caulaincourt, on one side, and me on the other, when we found ourselves face to face with General Bonaparte. My mother saluted him, and passed on, when the General advanced a few steps and spoke to her. My mother was, in my opinion, rather too dry: her ill-humour was not yet quite dispelled, but in her excellent heart there was nothing like rancour. It was the reverse with the General. Be this as it may, he appeared to look at my mother with admiration. Indeed, that evening in particular, she was truly captivating. The General spoke in a low tone for some seconds to the Turkish ambassador, whom he held by the arm. The Turk uttered an exclamation, and fixed upon my mother his large

eyes, to which, when he chose, he could give a look of stupidity, and then made a sort of obeisance. "I told him that you are of Greek extraction," said Bonaparte to my mother, saluting her by way of adieu. Then, holding out his hand, he pressed hers in a friendly manner, and left us after a short conversation, which nevertheless drew the attention of the company, though it lasted but a few minutes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Illness of my mother—Domestic details—M. de Baudeloque, and M. Sabatier—A treble fright—Correction of a mistake of M. de Bourrienne—The 18th Fructidor.

Shortly before the 18th Fructidor, I was exceedingly alarmed on account of the state of my mother's health. She was attacked by a disorder which is dangerous at any age, but particularly so at her time of life. M. Sabatier, M. Pelletan, and Baudeloque, came all three to see her almost every day for the fifty-two days that the danger lasted.

My affection for her gave me preternatural strength. Such an instance was never heard of as that of a girl of fourteen being able to go through the watching, fatigues, and alarms of fifty-two successive nights. The three skilful physicians whom I have just named, could not believe it, though they were daily witnesses of it. For a moment I was afraid I should not have strength to support the burden. I was alone; my brother was still in Italy. I saw my mother turn her languid eyes to me, and the agonizing expression which momentarily animated them indicated but too plainly how keen a sense she had of her situation. Her daughter was likely to be left an orphan, and alone! I had written to my brother, but not received any answer. Every now and then, my mother called to me in a faint voice to ask if letters had not arrived from Italy. I was obliged to answer in the negative, and I perceived that this reply distressed her exceedingly. All the agony of mind and body, that nature is capable of enduring, was felt by my poor mother.

I was aware of my situation, but it had no horrors for me, excepting in the frightful futurity which I dreaded: my mother was all in all to me; it was she who engaged all my faculties. I suffered much, I wept much, during the six weeks that I passed by her pillow, but I never once thought of asking, "What shall I do when she is no more?"

We had many friends; I have no doubt that till my brother's arrival ten houses would have opened to receive me; but I repeat it, the thought never entered my mind. When I saw my mother so ill as to be unable to leave her bed, my grief was at first violent; but when the symptoms of her painful disease became so aggravated as to threaten her life, my despair overpowered me to such a degree, that I had no energy and presence of mind beyond what was requisite to make me the most intelligent of nurses. I was every where. I could not bear my mother to take a spoonful of medicine or a basin of gruel from any hand but mine. She had an Alsatian *femme de chambre*, who was an excellent creature, and exceedingly attached to her. She was a clever nurse. But I was not satisfied with her attendance, though I could rely upon her. I could not sleep, if I left her alone with my mother. If I lay down for a few hours, anxiety kept me awake, and I returned at four in the morning, unable to finish the night in my bed.

At length, the danger became so imminent, that the physicians thought it their duty no longer to conceal the fact. It was, however, difficult to tell a girl who had no other support, no other good, but her mother, that she must die! Nevertheless, I heard this sentence, and I had strength to ask, if there was nothing at all that could save her. "Nature and incessant attention, not only every minute, but every moment, may do much," replied Baudeloque; "and therefore you must eat and sleep, that you may have strength." Sabatier was the one who understood me best. He did not say to me "eat and sleep," but he almost forced me to bathe two or three times a week. He recommended to me a generous and strengthening regimen, and he studied in particular to calm my poor head, which was no longer capable of bearing the weight of so many anxieties. I shall never forget his kind attentions; and when, thirty years afterwards, his daughter became my niece, I could not help expressing, though very briefly, my attachment to her father. A longer phrase than that which I used, would have been in bad taste.

My poor mother was saved. The incessant attention paid to her at length triumphed over a disease which the whole faculty of Paris pronounced to be mortal. On the day that hope was restored to me, a singular circumstance occurred. It was noon when the physicians informed me that my mother was out of danger. I wrote immediately to my brother, who was then in Italy: I was mad with joy. I could not take any rest either in the morning or during the rest of the day. In vain my mother begged me to go and lie down. "To-night I will," was my invariable reply. At length, when the beloved patient was

properly wrapped up for the night, when she had taken her jelly-broth, and her drawn curtains admitted only the faint light of a night-lamp; when I had kissed her brow, pale and cold as marble, and received her blessing, I retired to my little chamber, and prepared to go to bed for the first time for nearly two months, after thanking God with a grateful and deeply affected heart. I lay down. No sooner was my head upon my pillow, than I was overpowered with a stupor, rather than real sleep; I was in a kind of lethargy; not even a dream disturbed this state of complete quietude. I know not whether I have succeeded in conveying an idea of what I then experienced; but the reader may judge how violent the shock must have been which I received, when I felt myself shaken by the arm, and heard a tremulous voice stammering in my ear: "*Mademoiselle! mademoiselle! ah, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! Madame.. madame* has just expired in my arms!" I shrieked, and instantly was as wide awake as at the same hour the preceding night. I pushed aside the trembling Josephine, flew to my mother's room, drew back with violence the curtains of her bed, threw myself upon her, called her, and my poor mother was awakened by me as I had myself been by Josephine. She had been fast asleep.

My mother was beginning to recover from an illness, which did not leave her, I verily believe, above four ounces of blood in her veins. Her paleness, her emaciation, were truly frightful: she was naturally extremely fair, and her complexion was now of an alabaster whiteness, without the slightest rosy tinge. Lying thus between the white sheets, her face surrounded by cambric, the reflection of which added to her paleness, my poor mother had, indeed a look that was rather alarming to any but her own child.

My poor mother trembled for above an hour with the fright which I had given her on entering her chamber. At length, towards morning, she fell asleep again. As for me, it is easy to imagine how I finished the night. I would not return to my bed, but placed myself in a large easy-chair, which served me habitually to sleep in; and there, though more composed, I could not get so much as an hour's nap. The shock had had such an effect upon me, that Sabatier and Pelletan declared I had narrowly escaped two calamities, which might have been the consequence of Josephine's imprudence—epilepsy and death.

The winter which followed my mother's recovery was extremely gay, though the expedition to Egypt was resolved upon, and almost every family was occupied by its own particular interests. But, on the other hand, several thousand families were rejoiced by the return of brothers, sons, fathers, husbands; people began to breathe more freely; they were happier than they had been for three years past;

they fully enjoyed this happiness, without thinking of the future, without considering that it was as liable to be broken as a glass. Almost the whole of the Bonaparte family was at Paris, collected about Joseph, who was now the head of it. The General did not willingly yield this prerogative: he could not by right arrogate it to himself, but in fact he exercised it, and that without appeal.*

The 18th Fructidor had produced a strange effect on the different societies of Paris. Many emigrants, who had returned before that memorable day, built strong hopes upon the influence which they had over several deputies of the Council of Ancients, and still more of the Council of Five Hundred. It was the latter body in particular that it was their interest to win: but it was much more difficult to arrive at any result with young enthusiastic minds, thoroughly republican, and thoroughly resolved to maintain the revolutionary institutions. It was therefore towards the Council of Five Hundred that the eyes of all the projectors of counter-revolutions were directed; and there were then great numbers of them in Paris. All the agitators repaired to the Capital, which became the focus of the different parties. A counter revolution was never nearer than at this moment. To be fully convinced of this, we ought to recollect the various political societies at that time not only tolerated but authorized; and among these societies it is well known the club of Clichy was one of the most powerful.

* On this occasion I shall correct a statement of Bourrienne, in his Memoirs. By and by I shall have numerous observations to make on other matters which more nearly concern me, in the person of my husband, and in that of the Emperor. In the first volume, Bourrienne quotes an entire letter, which he ascribes to Madame Bacciochi: in this he is wrong, for that letter is from Christine Boyer, the first wife of Lucien, as the mere perusal of it should have been sufficient to convince him. The inaccuracy which I have here pointed out is wholly unimportant, and I am sure that it has escaped the notice of almost all those persons who have read M. de Bourrienne's Memoirs. In order to recognise at first sight the precise position of each member of the Bonaparte family, a person must have been as intimate with them all as I was.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Sketch of society at Paris prior to the 18th Fructidor—Civic *fêtes* and dinners in the streets—Grecian and Roman fashions—Antique costumes—The *Incroyables* and the club of Clichy—Presumption and infatuation of the Faubourg Saint-Germain—Portrait of Marshal Augereau—Consequences of the 18th Fructidor and deportations—Cruelty of the Directory—Bonaparte the author of the 18th Fructidor—Joseph Bonaparte in the Five Hundred—Madame Joseph—Mademoiselle Clary, Queen of Sweden—Bernadotte's marriage—Portrait of Joseph Bonaparte—The Bonaparte family—Bonaparte in Paris—Preparations for the expedition to Egypt—Portrait of Louis Bonaparte.

At the period of which I am treating, a company that was at all numerous offered a curious subject for study. The contemporary Memoirs do not describe sufficiently, for the information of future times, so singular an aspect of our Revolution. In the times of the Fronde and of the League, the powerful nobles and the great vassals fought for or against the sovereign; history was on the field of battle, or in the interior of certain castles; the destinies of the people were not discussed, with an *almost* serious look, in a group of twenty young heads; the most important interests, the ministerial decisions, the most momentous matters, were not submitted to inexperience. Yet this is what we have long witnessed; this is what I should like to describe. I allude to the time when our reason, evidently deranged, though our character was wonderfully fine, set us a playing at parades for the amusement of rational people. Why not treat more largely of the national feasts, given from a good motive, but rendered ludicrous by the burlesque manner in which every thing was conducted? This folly was intense, and lasted long enough to be entitled to a place in the memoirs of the time. I am the more decidedly of this opinion, since all the actors in these droll scenes were of the number of our legislators. The republican mania did not confine itself to decreeing a republic. When the partisans of this state of things perceived that it was an Utopia not to be realized, they contented themselves with insisting on keeping the patriotic goddesses, the civic feasts. They dined in the open air, which was rather annoying when the wind was high; or in the street, which was always filthy. But people dined in common at Sparta; it was right, therefore, that they should dine in common at Paris: too

happy in having escaped the black broth. At that period, too, young men ran about the streets as real *sans-culottes*, with a short tunic and a mantle, or rather an ample toga, for they borrowed a bit from all the republics; that is to say, to do mischief—

"Et Lycurgue enseignait à brûler les châteaux."*

But, as for the republic *par excellence*, we shall talk a good deal about it, but we shall not take it for our model in any particular.

The company kept by my mother, and by a lady, or rather a gentleman, of her acquaintance (for the husband decided every thing in that house), was composed of a great number of persons of diametrically opposite opinions. The artists and literary men talked and dreamt of nothing but a republic. Young men, dressed completely in the Grecian style, as I have already observed, were seen gravely walking in their white togas with red borders, stopping under one of the entrances of the Louvre, and discussing beneath the porch the gravest interests of the state. They did not laugh, but held their chins with one hand, saluted each other by wagging the head, and strove, in short, to play the old Romans, even the youngest of them, as well as they could. Don't suppose that there were only two or three of these young maniacs; there were two or three hundred of them at least.†

But the republican party was not the only one about the time of the 21st and 22d of May, and even the 4th of October: there were in Paris a great number of young men of good families, who had adopted a costume peculiar to themselves. This was a gray frock-coat with a black collar, a black or green cravat, hair *en oreilles de chien*, plated, powdered and fastened up with a comb, and a thick cudgel in the hand. This was the costume of the Clichyans in particular. At the Manège, or at the society of the Rue de Bac, the wearer of a queue would have been knocked on the head, as was proved in more than one instance.

As for the sham Greek, he was perfectly safe; people contented themselves with laughing at him to his face.

I have already observed, that a numerous company was a truly curious subject for examination. My mother's drawing-room exhibited this species of mosaic-work. The Faubourg Saint Germain, however, predominated in it, not merely in point of number, but because my mother held the opinions of that party. M. de l'Aigle, M. de Noailles, M. de Rastignac, M. d'Hautefort, Madame de Caseaux, Madame de

* Satire de Berchoux.

† It is well known that at the time of the Revolution, about the year 1794, the pupils of David, and of another painter, dressed themselves in the Grecian and Roman style.

Lostanges, Madame de Chalais, Madame de Contades, M. de Perigord, Madame de Lamarlière, Madame de Brissac, Madame de Vergennes, M. Alex. Delaborde, M. de Caulaincourt, Madame de Maillé, Madame de Fontanges, Albert d'Orsay, and many more, if not the intimate friends, belonged to the ordinary company at my mother's. Then came persons who held Clichyan opinions, and yet were not people of any note. Of this number I could name several personages, who would not be best pleased about it at this time of day.

Some time after my mother's illness, there was a great talk of a Revolution being about to take place. That illness had left behind a nervous affection, which required the utmost caution to spare my mother every kind of shock, whether moral or physical: the slamming of a door caused a palpitation for an hour. It was necessary also to avoid whatever was liable to excite any emotion. She who had been so strong and so courageous, had now become timorous and faint-hearted. I trembled, therefore, in my turn on receiving this intelligence. "What," said I, "more alarms! Shall we never be at peace!" Alas! who would have thought that, thirty-two years later, I should be daily repeating, without the hope of better times, "What! more alarms!"

This Revolution was the 4th of September. As I do not mean to write a history of the Revolution, I shall not dwell upon this day, but only touch upon it as far as concerns my friends. Many were included in that fatal list, on which any one might insert the name of him whom he wished to proscribe and persecute. I knew two unfortunate men, who bore each other a grudge: their opinions were royalist and constitutional. On the 3d, one of them proscribed; on the 4th, he was proscribed; on the 6th, both of them were. The most curious part of the business was, that they were each ruined by the other.

A point worthy of remark in our character is, that levity governs and guides every thing within us. But there is a class in France, in which this levity attains such a degree of force, if I may so express myself, as to acquire consistence. Then, indeed, it ceases to deserve the name of levity; it becomes a reckless intolerable self-conceit—a confidence in every scheme—a contempt for all advice, that borders on insanity. And do you know where this quality is to be found, in spite of experience which cries out to them—make use of your reason? Why, in the same Faubourg Saint-Germain. There you will find together with the most brilliant valour, the most chivalrous honour, and a hundred distinguished qualities, this absolute lack of reason, judgment, and of brains. The most absurd plans rank first. They take no heed of the rumbling of the thunder; they dance upon a volcano,

and make merry. You warn them, and they laugh you to scorn.

At the period of which I am speaking, about the 31st of August, my mother cautioned a friend of my father, who, having returned from emigration, had thrust himself in among these unfortunate Clichyans. My mother said to him, "I know that another revolution is impending; it will, perhaps, be a sanguinary one, and here are my proofs." She put into his hands evidences confirming what she said. "Pooh!" replied M. de Béhaut, making a *pirouette*, "your news is a hundred years old. The Directory will never dare to attack such a party as ours. Recollect, that all France is on our side. Had we not agreed to spare the lives of a few men, some seven or eight heads which we do not choose to strike off, that business would have been settled a month ago." His tranquil look was truly admirable. In this respect almost all the Clichyans were alike. Their eyes were covered with a bandage. In regard to their position and their weight, as an acting, deliberative society, they had—what shall I call it?—an incredible presumption; and yet, on the same day, they knew nothing of the danger that threatened them four days afterwards. They wanted money to organize something or other in their club, and the person whom they had appointed treasurer, went about seeking it, and applying for a loan of a thousand crowns to carry on what they called the administration. It was truly pitiful.

At length came that terrible day, the 4th September. I call it *terrible*, because the establishment of a republic in France, such as the fond dreams of our hearts represent it, may be impracticable, but still we had one, even in the Directory. After the institution of this dictatorship, or of this royalty in five volumes, tatters of this republic had daily fallen under the blows of the Directory itself and the anarchists: at any rate, some part of it was yet left. This solemn day utterly destroyed it. The republic, whose foundations had been cemented by the pure and glorious blood of the martyrs of the Gironde, had vanished, was dispelled like a dream: the blood of the victims alone had left reprobatory recollections.

The conduct of the Directory on this occasion displayed ability. That body acted at first with a cunning, and afterwards with a boldness worthy of a better cause. In fact, the army of Italy exercised over us, at that time, the ascendancy to which we bowed at a later period; and General Augereau did but execute prescribed and circumstantial orders. He was a man who might possess that daring spirit which hurries along thousands of soldiers in its train: but, for directing a political movement, for organizing the simplest machination, he was a mere cipher. Not only was he a soldier, but his manners were those

of a soldier: every thing about him betrayed the uneducated man. His vanity was, nevertheless, inordinate. We met him sometimes at a house where my mother visited a good deal, that of M. Saint-Sardos. I confess that his manner not only excited in me that disgust which must be felt by a young female, accustomed to see none but well-bred people; but there was superadded that which I experienced as a warm admirer of General Bonaparte, on account of his campaigns in Italy: it put me out of temper to think that this booby, as I called him, should presume, in his pride, to dispute the palm of glory with Bonaparte. My mother, who was not always of my way of thinking relative to Bonaparte, agreed with me in my opinion on this subject.

As to the consequences of that cruel day, they were such as might have been expected. The Directory triumphed as it had fought, in a cowardly and barbarous manner. It was well aware that royalty had been called for, not so much out of love to the royal family, as out of hatred to itself; the Directory knew this, and took a base revenge. When I consider what France was when that body began to undermine the sacred edifice, I cannot find in my heart any pity for such of its members as complained that they were duped on the 8th November; their punishment was a great deal too mild.

The consequences of the 4th September gave us cause to regret deeply the proscription and exile of several of our friends. During many days, we durst scarcely inquire about persons for whom we felt an interest; and a new terror, as it were, reigned in Paris. The events of September communicated a rapid and painful movement to society in Paris. Almost every family mourned a relative or a friend. My mother was deeply afflicted: her opinion and her affections were wounded: there was more than enough to distress a good heart and a warm head.

The peal that gave the signal for the 4th of September, came from Italy; it was the hand of Bonaparte that rang it; he was determined to crush the royalist party in the assembly. The Clichyans, by refusing Joseph, and I believe Lucien, had incensed him; and from that moment, so Junot told me, he swore that the men of the guilty party, as he called it, should not see the close of the year while on their curule chairs. After the departure of the unfortunate proscripts, Joseph Bonaparte was nominated deputy of the Liamone to the Council of Five Hundred. He then completed the fitting-up of his pretty house, in the Rue de Rocher, and prepared to receive company: he was expecting his mother and his youngest sister, Caroline. Mademoiselle Désirée Clary had just married Bernadotte. We were at the wedding, which took place in a very plain manner, in Joseph's house. Mad-

emoiselle Clary was rich, and extremely pleasing in person and manners; Bernadotte made a very good match.

Of all Bonaparte's brothers, none have been so erroneously judged, and that universally, as Joseph. I have read a multitude of memoirs, and every where found a false mask substituted for the real face of this man; so that it is this caricature and not himself on which judgment has been passed. Joseph, moreover, is not the only one of the family that I shall replace in his proper light; and this I can do with the greater facility, because all its members are as well known to me as my own relations, in consequence of an intimate association of many years, at a period long anterior to their metamorphosis.

My brother was particularly intimate with Joseph. I know not when this friendship commenced; but I believe that it was at the time when my brother, in order to escape the requisition, was at Marseilles and Toulon with Salicetti.

Joseph Bonaparte is one of the most excellent men that can be met with: he is good-natured, intelligent, a cultivator of French and Italian literature, fond of retirement, but not out of affectation. Much has been said, but to no purpose, relative to the weak conduct of Joseph at Naples and in Spain. I know not what he did, or what he could have done at Naples; but this I know, that in Spain he could do no better, because he went there wholly against his inclination, and it distressed him exceedingly to be obliged to go to that unhappy country, filled with troubles and dissensions, where the dagger or the blunderbuss threaten you every moment; a country where all the good that he did, and I am certain that he did a great deal, was accounted only as a duty performed. No, no: the man who has been good, honourable, virtuous, for a long series of years, does not change all at once and become cowardly and even wicked. That cannot be true.

Joseph is handsome, very like the Princess Pauline. They have both the same delicate features, the same winning smile, the same kind look. Joseph has always been a great favourite with our family. At Montpellier, after his father had breathed his last in my mother's arms, Joseph came to live with his uncle Fesch, in the house of my parents. I mention this circumstance again, because Joseph never forgot it; on the contrary, he always tendered me his hand, to testify his gratitude for what my mother had done for him.

Madame Joseph Bonaparte is an angel of goodness. Pronounce her name, and all the indigent, all the unfortunate in Paris, Naples, and Madrid, will repeat it with blessings; yet she was never at Madrid, and knew nothing of that foreign land but from the accounts of it that were given to her. Never did she hesitate a moment to set

about what she conceived to be her duty. Accordingly Madame de Survilliers* is adored by all about her, and especially by her own household: her unalterable kindness, her active charity, gain her the love of every body, and in the land of exile she has found a second native country.

She was fondly attached to her sister, the Queen of Sweden. The latter is an excellent, and in my opinion an inoffensive creature; but she has one defect which her present situation renders almost a vice—she is a mere cipher. Her character has no colour. Nay, more, she may easily be persuaded to do any person an ill turn, because she is not aware of the drift of the procedure. For the rest, I recollect the Queen of Sweden being prodigiously fond of every thing that was melancholy and *romantic*. The latter term was then unknown; since one knows what it means, it has not quite so strong a resemblance to insanity.

When she married Bernadotte, she had a face of which I shall say nothing, because we were then thought to be exceedingly like each other. She had very fine eyes and a most pleasing smile. Lastly, she had not too much *embonpoint*, as at the time of her departure for Sweden, and she was altogether a very agreeable person. She was fond of her husband, which was natural enough; but that fondness became a downright annoyance to the poor Bearnese, who, having nothing of a hero of romance in his composition, was sometimes extremely perplexed by the part. She was continually in tears, when he had gone out because he was absent; when he was going out, more tears; and when he came home, she still wept because he would have to go away again, perhaps in a week, but at any rate he would have to go.

Lucien and his wife arrived at Paris at the same time, I believe, as also Madame Lætitia and Caroline Bonaparte. The General came to Paris, and afterwards set out again for Toulon. The Egyptian expedition was in preparation. Applications from all quarters poured in from young men, who, in ignorance of the armament, but hoping that it might be for Constantinople or England, enrolled themselves in crowds. Every body wanted to accompany it.

In sketching the different portraits of the Bonaparte family, I have said nothing of Louis, Jerome, or Caroline. The two latter were very young at the period of which I am treating.

Louis Bonaparte was engaging at eighteen: subsequently his infir-

* The name assumed by Prince Joseph. The Queen has taken it too, and retains it in Germany, where she now resides.

mities gave him the appearance of an old man before his time: this rendered him morose in appearance, and in reality miserable. He resembled the Queen of Naples when he was young and in health: there was the same cast of countenance, and the same expression in the look, when the features of the Queen of Naples were at rest; but, as soon as they were animated by her smile or her look, all resemblance vanished.

Louis is a mild, easy, good-natured man. The Emperor, with his whim of making kings of all his brothers, could not find one who would fall in with it. His sisters on the contrary seconded him, for they were devoured by ambition; but on this point the men have always shown a firm and determined will. Louis told him as much when he was setting out for Holland. "I will do what I like," said the young king to his brother. "Let me act freely or let me remain here. I will not go to govern a country, where I shall be known only by disaster."

The Emperor was absolute in his will. He sent Louis to Holland: the unfortunate young man went to experience a slow and cruel agony among its canals and marshes. The greater part of his present ailments proceed from that damp atmosphere, particularly unhealthy for a child of the south, like him. He obeyed, and his wife was destined there to feel the keenest anguish: her maternal heart was wrung by the death of her first-born.*

CHAPTER XXV.

Restoration of Society—Good company at public assemblies—Fashionable parties—The Bonaparte family at Paris—Portrait of Lucien—Bonaparte makes himself head of the family—Arrival of his mother and sister Caroline at Paris—Portrait of Caroline Bonaparte—Madame Bacciochi—Madame Leclerc and Paulette.

After the 4th September, our society presented a most singular aspect. Among the returned emigrants there were, as I have already observed, a great number of old acquaintances of my mother's, who, still full of apprehensions, and very just apprehensions too, were glad to find a drawing-room where, while they could talk with tolerable

* The eldest of the children of Louis and Hortense Beauharnais, died of the croup at Hague, in 1804.

Marie Caroline Louise

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freedom, they met several noted characters of the day, old friends, young acquaintance, all upon the same footing and talking in the same tone, because the mistress of the house held her sceptre with a firm hand, and would not suffer discussions to degenerate into quarrels. This was a meritorious mode of procedure at that time, when people made themselves hoarse with bawling whenever politics were mentioned.

At a former period, people cured you of your sore throat by cutting it for you. They had now, however, got tired of this remedy, by far too heroic, as it is said, in modern medicine. We were no longer summoned before the revolutionary tribunal because we had an income of fifty thousand livres, because, to confess the truth, nobody had such an income, at least to appearance. The Moniteur indeed was no longer daily dishonoured by sanguinary lists; but there were yet left the Temple, the plain of Grenelle, and deportations; though the horizon had cleared, there was still heard, as at the conclusion of violent storms, those isolated peals of thunder which almost always follow the tempest.

Notwithstanding all this, people recovered their gaiety: they went to dine at taverns, they would dance at public gardens, or take ice at a coffee-house; for it avails us nothing to ennoble things by giving them other names, in order to impose upon ourselves. Verry's, the balls at the Richelieu, Tivoli, and Marbeuf rooms, as well as at the Pavillon de Hanovre and Frascati, were in fact no more than what I have mentioned above; but this did not prevent good company from flocking thither and seeking amusement.

Amidst this dissipated life, and those pleasures which were sought as diversions from the remembrance of so many past sorrows and so many apprehensions for the future, a strange meeting of opposite parties took place. It began in my mother's house, and, strange to tell, it was the Bonaparte family that first found itself face to face with the *ancien régime*.

To introduce things in their proper places, I must here say something more about Lucien Bonaparte, with whom, as the reader has seen, I had recently become acquainted. Lucien's destiny has been more extraordinary, perhaps, than that of any of the members of his family. Almost till the 8th of November, he remained in comparative obscurity, as the reader may have already inferred.

At the period I am speaking of, that is in 1797, Lucien might be about twenty-two years of age: he was tall, ill-shaped, having limbs like those of the field-spider, and a small head, which, with his tall stature, would have made him unlike his brothers, had not his physi-

ognomy attested their common parentage. Lucien was very near-sighted, which made him half shut his eyes and stoop his head. This defect would therefore have given him an unpleasing air, if his smile, always in harmony with his features, had not imparted something agreeable to his countenance. Thus, though he was rather plain, he pleased generally. He had very remarkable success with women who were themselves very remarkable, and that long before his brother arrived at power. With respect to understanding and talent, Lucien always displayed abundance of both. In early youth, when he met with a subject that he liked he identified himself with it: he lived at that time in an ideal world. Thus, at eighteen, the perusal of Plutarch carried him into the Forum and the Pyræus. He was a Greek with Demosthenes, a Roman with Cicero: he espoused all the ancient glories, but he was intoxicated with those of our own time. Those who, because they had no conception of this enthusiasm, alleged that he was jealous of his brother, have asserted a wilful falsehood, if they have not fallen into a most egregious error. This is a truth for which I can pledge myself. But I would not with equal confidence assert the soundness of his judgment at this same period, when Bonaparte, at the age of twenty-five, laid the first stone of the temple which he dedicated to his immortality. Not naturally disposed, by the grandeur of his genius, to view things in a fantastic light, and attaching himself solely to their reality, Bonaparte proceeded direct to the goal with a firm and steady step. He had in consequence the meanest idea of those who kept travelling on, as he expressed it, in the kingdom of fools. From this rigorous manner of judging persons of ardent imaginations, it may be supposed that Lucien was smartly reprimanded whenever he addressed to him any of the philippics or catilinaria of the young Roman. He forgot that he himself, a few years before, whilst still in Corsica, had given proof of equally violent exaltation.

To the portrait of Lucien I shall add that of his wife Christine, though I have already spoken of her; but she was such an excellent creature, that whoever writes her eulogy may be pardoned some repetitions.

Madame Lucien was tall, well-shaped, slender, and had in her figure and carriage that native grace and ease which are imparted by the air and sky of the south; her complexion was dark, and she was pitted with the smallpox; her eyes were not large, and her nose was rather broad and flat: in spite of all this, she was pleasing, because her look was kind, her smile sweet, as well as her voice; she was graceful, in short, and good as an angel. Her love for her husband rendered her quick in adapting herself to her position; in a few weeks she became

Lucien Bonaparte

Lucien Bonaparte &c.

an elegant woman, wearing to admiration all that issued from the hands of Leroi, Mademoiselle Despaux, and Madame Germon.

On his first visit to Paris, Lucien made but a short stay there: on his return from Germany, he and his wife settled in Paris, and lived at this period in Grande Rue Verte, Faubourg Saint-Honoré.

Madame Bacciochi resided, like Lucien, in the Rue Verte. Madame Leclerc, who arrived from Italy soon after the period which I have just mentioned as that of the meeting of the family, took a house in the rue de la Ville-l'Evêque. We formed of course nearly the centre of the Corsican colony, in the heart of Paris: thus not a day passed on which some of the brothers or sisters did not visit us, or we them.

Caroline Bonaparte, who was called Annunziata, and who came with her mother from Marseilles, was then twelve years old. Handsome arms, small hands, delightful in form and whiteness, small well-turned feet, and a brilliant complexion—such were the characteristics of her beauty, with the addition of fine teeth, rosy cheeks, very fair but round shoulders, a figure rather too robust, and a manner not very elegant. Caroline was in other respects a very good girl, and we were as much together as my more intimate acquaintance with Mademoiselle de Perigord and Mademoiselle de Caseaux permitted.

Caroline was placed in a boarding-school, at St. Germain, with Madame Campan, not to finish her education, for it had not even been begun. Of Madame Leclerc we saw more than of any other in the family. She came every day to my mother, who was very fond of her, and petted her—that is the right word—by passing over with more indulgence than her mother the thousand and one whims which were bred, gratified, and abandoned in a day. Many people have extolled the beauty of Madame Leclerc: this is known from portraits, and even statues of her; still it is impossible to form any idea of what this lady, truly extraordinary as the perfection of beauty, then was, because she was not generally known till her return from St. Domingo, when she was already faded, nay withered, and nothing but the shadow of that exquisitely beautiful Paulette, whom we sometimes admired as we admire a fine statue of Venus or Galatea. She was still fresh on her arrival at Paris from Milan: but this freshness was of short duration: by the time she had lived a year in Paris, she began to be a very different person from the Paulette of Milan.

At this period she was an excellent creature: it has been said since that she was malicious, and this report has been spread even by persons of her household: I know not whether greatness changed her disposition.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Attention of Bonaparte to the establishment of his family—Amours of Bonaparte, and a box at the Feydeau—Levity of Josephine—Coldness between my mother and Bonaparte—Marquis de Caulaincourt—The two brothers, Armand and Auguste—Madame de Thelusson, and Madame de Mornay—Fashions—Bonaparte at Paris—Long and interesting conversation between Bonaparte and my brother—Projected expedition—Implacable hatred against England.

General Bonaparte was anxious to see all his family comfortably settled at Paris before he left Europe; but knowing that the republican generals were charged with rapacity, he did not wish his family to live in such splendour as might afford cause for malicious interpretations. Nothing was more simple than the style of Joseph's house, though at the same time it was respectably appointed. Bonaparte had also laid down rules for the guidance of Madame Bonaparte's conduct in this respect: had they been followed, this conquest over Josephine's spirit of dissipation would have surpassed the conquest of Egypt which he was about to undertake.

General Bonaparte, though younger than Joseph, and though his mother was still living, assumed from this moment the ascendancy and authority of a father and head over his family. The instructions which he left for their guidance were truly remarkable, and surprised my mother; she had not seen him at her house since her decided quarrel with him on account of my cousin Stephanopoli.* Naturally proud, she was now as glad to avoid Bonaparte as a few years before she had been anxious to meet him. The behaviour of the young General had deeply hurt her, and the indifference which he had shown in excusing himself, completely incensed her against him; but, subsequently, her excellent understanding made allowances for all that might then have occupied the head of such a man. Bonaparte was about this time as fond of his wife as his nature allowed him to be, when his faculties were wholly devoted to the vast projects he had himself conceived. No doubt he loved Josephine, but those who have

* He died lately, at Neuilly, in consequence of having cut a corn on his foot.

asserted that he loved her more than he ever did any other woman, have not followed him through his early life, nor discovered him in the character of a romantic lover: they have not seen him redden, turn pale, tremble, nay even weep. At the old Feydeau theatre, there was a box, No. 11, in the first tier, which knew much more about this matter than they do.

His love for his wife was not of the same nature. He loved her, no doubt, but without making of her one of those divinities which dazzle the acutest understanding, and prevent it from perceiving any imperfection, moral or personal, in the beloved object. Besides, there was an ingredient in his composition that tempered the effect of it, I mean the alleged gratitude which, more particularly about the time of his return from Italy, every one said that Bonaparte owed to his wife.

Madame Bonaparte showed a total want of prudence, not only in not imposing silence on those who spread this report, but also in giving it consistence by her continual confidences to a whole host of flatterers, and, above all, of intriguers, who never carried the weight of the secret more than an hour. I know that Bonaparte had been informed of the *authority*, if I may be allowed the term, which Madame Bonaparte gave to the absurd report which the enemies of Napoleon, and he had many already, circulated respecting him. It may easily be conceived, then, how his spirit must have been wounded, when he saw himself the object of a contemptuous look, when he heard the expression, "It is his wife's influence that upholds him." This was false and ridiculous; but it was said; and whoever knew Bonaparte well must be aware, that nothing more was required to produce an extraordinary effect upon him.

Bonaparte was acquainted with the inconsistency of his wife; accordingly, he recommended her to abstain above all things from talking about politics, a subject which she knew nothing of, and which could not fail to lead to conversations liable to compromise him. "What you say is supposed to come from me," he would frequently observe to her; "keep silence, and then my enemies, and you are surrounded by them, will not have it in their power to draw silly inferences from your words."

I have already observed, that the coolness which had taken place between my mother and General Bonaparte, instead of being removed, had been confirmed by my mother's keeping aloof from him. We met him but very rarely at the houses of his brothers; and he called on us only three times, I believe, during his stay at Paris. It is not, therefore, as an eye-witness that I relate what I have just stated; but we were better informed of all that passed in the house of the General

than if we had spent an hour there every day. My mother, notwithstanding her irritation, had the strongest attachment to Napoleon; she well knew, without however admitting it, that she had been to blame in the foolish quarrel about our cousin Stephanopoli, and this inward conviction was sufficient to render her still more solicitous to know all that concerned the happiness or unhappiness of a child whom she had brought up. This information, moreover, came to us from a much more authentic source than any thing that we might have learned from the complaints of the Bonaparte family. My mother, with her excellent understanding, knew that prejudice squints when it looks, and lies when it talks. Now, the whole family detested Madame Bonaparte. Was there a just cause for this hatred? We shall see by and by: all I say for the present is, that the enmity was strong and, I believe, heartily returned.

My mother had found again an old friend in her neighbourhood, M. de Caulaincourt, whose hotel, in the Rue Joubert, was not above a hundred paces from our house. To name him is sufficient to call to the minds of those who knew this excellent man all that is good, honourable, and honoured. The Marquis de Caulaincourt was likewise a friend of Madame Bonaparte; he had rendered her very great services. Of what nature, I know not; but my mother knew: they must have been very important; for subsequently, on the day that his two sons were presented to the first Consul, when M. de Caulaincourt described to my mother the truly remarkable reception which Bonaparte had given to himself and his sons, "Indeed, I can easily believe it," said my mother; "if even the merits of Armand and Auguste had not required this distinction, the gratitude which his wife owes you would have imperatively commanded it." M. de Caulaincourt approached my mother's bed, for she was lying down at the time, and whispered to her for a few moments. "No, no," said my mother, "'tis not enough. Consider besides that your sons may aspire to every thing. Where do you find men possessing their qualifications, and who moreover have at their age their military renown?"

M. de Caulaincourt was therefore a frequent visitor at the house of Madame Bonaparte. He gave her advice, which she listened to without following. He had a real friendship for her, and he proved it unequivocally; but Madame Bonaparte was excessively frivolous and fickle, with the appearance of good-nature. M. de Caulaincourt soon became disliked, though he was far from suspecting it; and subsequently, when, in consequence of my marriage, I formed one of the select circle at the Tuileries, I did not wound his heart by telling him that he was called the *dotard*.

M. de Caulaincourt was like a living tradition of a period which our fathers themselves considered as belonging to another age. His sons did not resemble him. Armand, afterwards Duke of Vicenza, had much of the look of his mother; Auguste was not like any body, neither was Madame de Saint-Aignan, formerly Madama de Thelusson. As for Madame de Mornay, now Madame d'Esternau, she was a fine woman, and had much of the elegant carriage and manners of Armand.

M. de Caulaincourt was a man of such an original stamp, that I should look around me in vain at the present day, for any one resembling him. His features had been very delicate in his youth, and, though short in stature, he was perfectly well made. He had dark expressive eyes, to which, however, he seldom gave a severe expression. Many years have since passed, and yet my recollection of M. de Caulaincourt is so strong, that methinks, at this moment, I can see him alighting from his horse at my mother's door, on his return from Madame Bonaparte, Rue Chantereine. Never shall I forget that pretty pony, which fashion led him to choose: he paid all his visits upon horseback, like a country apothecary. Having formerly been a cavalry officer, highly esteemed in his corps, he had retained, in spite of time, reform, and revolution, the clumsy jack-boots, long queue, coat with large metal buttons, and waistcoat with flaps. Below these flaps hung two immense watch-chains, with such a collection of trinkets, that, when I did not hear the usual noise made by the horse and himself, their jingle, as soon as he began to ascend the stairs, apprised me of his approach. He was thoroughly convinced that the most graceful fashion of the day could not stand a comparison with his; and, to speak the truth, I should be puzzled to tell which was most laughable, he, or a young *incroyable* of that time, buried in a muslin cravat two yards wide, with a coat, the skirts of which reached little lower than the hips, whilst pantaloons, ample enough to make a gown, gave to the lower part of his person the appearance of a woman. Add to this capricious costume, hair falling in long thick cork-screws over the immense cravat, and a hat, so extremely small, that it was difficult to keep it upon the head, which it scarcely covered.

M. de Caulaincourt called me his daughter, and I called him my *little papa*. Armand, afterwards grand-equerry to the Emperor, and I, were long accustomed, even at court, to call one another brother and sister. The portrait of the Duke of Vicenza has not been favourably drawn by prejudice and envy. He was not liked. He was perhaps rather too much convinced of his superiority over most of those who formed the military circle of the Emperor, and this conviction gave

him an air of reserve which superficial persons took for haughtiness. He was clever, and had as much the manners of a gentleman as any man in France. His brother was far from being equal to him. Auguste's temper was by no means agreeable, and I have frequently heard my mother reprimand him severely for unpoliteness, even to the friends of his father. At this period both brothers were with their regiments.

General Bonaparte, after staying but a few weeks at Paris, when on the point of leaving Europe with the chance of never returning, had been influenced by a feeling of violent irritation. My brother, who in Italy had always kept upon the best terms with the General, had called to see him at Bonaparte's request. Albert went several times, and always came back more and more certain that Napoleon was excessively mortified by the course of events. "I plainly perceive," said Albert, "that his great spirit is too much compressed in that narrow centre, within which those needy Directors wish to confine it: it is a free flight in untrammelled space that such wings demand. He will die here; he must begone. This morning," added Albert, "he said to me: 'This Paris weighs me down like a cloak of lead!' And then he paced to and fro."

"And yet," replied Albert, "never did grateful country hail more cordially one of its children. The moment you appear, the streets, the promenades, the theatres, ring with shouts of *Vive Bonaparte!* The people love you, General."

While my brother thus spoke, Bonaparte looked steadfastly at him. He stood motionless, his hands crossed behind him, and his whole countenance expressing attention mingled with the liveliest interest: he then began walking again with a pensive look.

"What think you of the East, Permon?" he abruptly asked my brother. "You seem to have had an excellent education; for your father, I believe, originally destined you for the diplomatic line, did he not?" My brother replied in the affirmative. "You speak the modern Greek, I believe?" Albert nodded assent. "And Arabic?" Albert answered in the negative, adding, that he could easily learn to speak it in the course of a month.

"Indeed! well, in that case I . . . ." here Bonaparte paused, as if fearful that he had said too much. He, nevertheless, reverted to the subject a moment afterwards, and asked Albert if he had been at M. de Talleyrand's ball. "That was a delightful *fête*," he added; "my army of Italy would be very proud, if it knew that its commander had received such high honours. Yes, the Directors have done things nobly. I should not have supposed that they had such skill in paying

compliments: what luxury!" He walked about for a considerable time without speaking, and then resumed: "It was more magnificent than our royal entertainments of old. The Directory ought not thus to forget its republican origin. Is there not affectation in appearing in such pomp before those who, in fact, can counterbalance its power? I represent the army!" added Bonaparte, "yes, I represent the army, and the Directors know whether the army is at this moment powerful in France."

Nothing could be more true than this last insinuation of Bonaparte. At this period, the army actually possessed great influence; and a distant expedition was already much talked of in public. Bonaparte asked my brother several questions relative to this subject. Albert answered, that it was generally believed that the projected expedition was destined against England.

The smile that now played upon Napoleon's lips, as Albert afterwards told us, had so strange, so incomprehensible an expression, that he could not tell what to make of it.

"England!" he then rejoined. "So, you think in Paris, that we are going to attack it at last? The Parisians are not mistaken; it is indeed to humble that saucy nation that we are arming. England! If my voice has any influence, never shall England have an hour's truce. Yes, yes, war with England for ever, until its utter destruction. Permon, if you choose, I will take you with me; you speak fluently English, Italian, Greek. Yes, I will take you with me."

The conversation detailed here is the summary of what passed at five or six interviews. My brother heard in all quarters a variety of surmises concerning the projected expedition. The secret was long kept, but at length it was divulged; for Bonaparte, covetous of all kinds of glory, resolved to surround himself with the splendour which the arts and sciences impart to every thing. He laid the Institute itself under contribution. An immense battalion accompanied the new Alexander to the banks of the Nile, whence it was destined to bring back a trophy more brilliant than any that blood can give to posterity.

As soon as my brother learned that the expedition was destined for so distant a country, his resolution was taken; he arranged his affairs and prepared for his departure. My mother, when she knew it, threw herself, in a manner, at his feet, entreating him not to forsake her. Albert needed no second supplication; he remained.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Family of Junot—His education—His character—The battalion of the Côte d'Or—Junot a grenadier—Promoted to serjeant—The siege of Toulon—First meeting of Junot and Bonaparte—Extraordinary scene—Junot is Bonaparte's first aide-de-camp—Curious correspondence between Junot and his father—Remarkable dream—Muiron and Marmont—Death of Muiron—Wounds of Junot—Inexplicable errors in the Memorial of St. Helena—Politeness of Junot—Adventures of Madame de Brionne at Dijon—She presents Junot with her portrait—Baron de Steyer.

Among the young officers whom Bonaparte had introduced to my mother, when he was appointed to the command of the army of the interior, she distinguished one, as well on account of his manners, blunt without rudeness, and his open countenance, as for the extreme attachment which he manifested for his General. This attachment bordered upon passion. He manifested an enthusiasm so touching, that my mother, whose elevated soul and loving heart were capable of appreciating all exalted sentiments, had immediately distinguished Colonel Junot; and, from that moment, she felt the sincerest friendship for him. I was then quite a girl, and never dreamt that the handsome colonel, with light hair, elegant dress, engaging countenance, and yet serious look, would come three years afterwards, and, out of love, solicit the hand of the little girl, whom at that time he scarcely noticed.

Of all the officers composing Bonaparte's staff, Colonel Junot had followed a destiny the most adventurous and the most fortunate. He bore, in recent scars, the glorious marks of a valour which his bitterest enemies have not attempted to deny him. The General-in-chief had known how to appreciate it; and with the origin of his fortune were connected several remarkable acts, not only of courage, but also of honour and generosity. It was at the siege of Toulon that the General had become acquainted with him, and in a manner which, for its singularity, deserves to be related at length.

Junot was born at Bussy-Legrand, in the department of the Côte d'Or, on the 24th September, 1771, and it may be observed, by the way, that he received for a christian name that of the saint whose festival happened to fall on the day of his birth: hence he had the most

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singular name perhaps in France—it was Andoche. What trouble this unlucky name gave in the sequel to the masters in the art of pleasing, who took it into their heads to celebrate the ruling powers.

Junot's parents were respectable *bourgeois;* his family was in easy circumstances. His mother's two brothers were, the one a physician at Paris, where he was deservedly esteemed, and the other first canon of the cathedral at Evreux, possessing good benefices, which he meant to leave to the elder of his nephews, M. Junot, who died Receiver-general of the Upper Sâone. The abbé Bien-Aimé was a worthy priest, whose memory I revere. He died bishop of Metz, in 1806, regretted by his whole diocese, the poor of which called him *le Bien-Nommé.*

As, prior to the Revolution of 1789, the class of the *bourgeoisie* never put their sons into the army, Junot was destined for the bar. His education, begun at Montbard, under an excellent man, named Heurté, of whom he frequently spoke with gratitude, was completed at the college of Châtillon-sur-Seine. Here he first became acquainted with Marmont, who was a pupil at the same college, and here they contracted that friendship which nothing ever diminished, though both of them pursued the same career. This friendship ended only with Junot's death in 1813.

Junot was a man of a very extraordinary character, which was not always duly appreciated by those about him, because himself sometimes threw an obstacle in the way, in consequence of a defect which really was a drawback from his many good qualities—I mean an extreme irritability, easily excited in him by the mere appearance of a fault. Whenever he had reason to suspect any one, more especially a person under his command, of neglect in matters connected with the service, he could not help reproving him for it, and the more harshly, as, in the like case, he would have been just as severe towards one of his own relations. On such occasions his frankness did not allow him one circumlocutory word.

Junot had a superior soul; he was a stranger to falsehood, and was endowed with a generosity which his enemies have endeavoured to represent as a vice, but which his numerous family, who for fifteen years had no other support than him, a great number of crippled soldiers, of widows encumbered with children, who received pensions and relief from him, will never call any thing but the virtue of a noble heart.

He possessed in an eminent degree the qualities of a good son, a warm friend, and an excellent father. I recollect Mr. Fox telling me one day how he was struck, the preceding evening, when leaving the

opera-house, on seeing Junot paying as much attention and respect to his mother as he could have done to the first peeress of England.* How many college friends, how many indigent relatives, has he succoured and saved! How many ungrateful persons are there to whom he was a patron, a brother, and whose fortunes he made!

Junot doated on his children. Who can know, as I have done, all that anxiety, so strong and so tender, which he felt even in the midst of personal danger! What letters he would write me! How affecting they were for their candour and ingenuousness! At one time he would inquire whether his boy had cut his tenth tooth. At another he would say—"But when shall you wean little Rodrigue?" And then his girls, what were they doing? were they grown? did they work at their needle? These details may appear trivial; but those letters were written under the fire of the enemy, amid the snows of Russia, or perhaps an hour after receiving a wound, which had not even been dressed. I preserve all those invaluable letters. They shall descend as a sacred inheritance to my children.

Having begun life with the Revolution, Junot was absolutely one of its children. He was scarcely twenty when the first roll of the drum was heard. A war-cry rang throughout the kingdom: the most discreet panted for combat; all were tired of repose. Had not Junot been my husband, I should tell how he became all at once a young Achilles. Suddenly smitten with a passion for arms, he wholly forgot the luxurious and indolent life which till then he had led. It was then that he entered into that celebrated battalion of volunteers of the Côte-d'Or, so renowned for the number of generals and great officers of the empire, who sprang from its ranks. Its commander was the amiable and unfortunate Cazotte. After the surrender of Longwy, the battalion was ordered to Toulon, to join the forces collected to retake it from the English. This was the most terrible moment of the Revolution. Junot was sergeant of grenadiers, which rank had been conferred on him upon the field of battle. Often, when relating to me the circumstances of the first years of his adventurous life, did he speak of that event as the most extraordinary that had befallen him. He said, with that accent which persuades, because it is true, that, in the whole course of his career of honours, nothing ever threw him into such a delirium of joy as that which he experienced when his comrades, all of them as brave as himself, appointed him their sergeant, when their commander confirmed their appointment, and he

* Mr. Fox meant by no means to satirize France by appearing to think it admirable that a son should give his arm to his mother. It was the extraordinary care and attention that struck him, as he himself acknowledged.

was lifted on a tremulous platform supported by bayonets still dripping with the blood of the enemy.

It was about this time that, being one day on duty at the battery of the Sans-Culottes, a commandant of artillery, who had come a few days before from Paris to direct the operations of the siege, in as far as the artillery under the command of Cartaux was concerned, applied to the officer of the post for a young subaltern, possessing both courage and intelligence. The lieutenant immediately called *la Tempête*—Junot stepped forward. The commandant scrutinized him with an eye that seemed already to look through the man.

"Pull off your coat," said the commandant, "and carry this order yonder," pointing to the most distant part of the coast, and explaining what he wished him to do. "I am not a *spy*," said he to the commandant; "seek somebody else, I shall not take your order." He was retiring. "So, you refuse to obey?" said the superior officer, in a sharp tone: "do you know to what punishment you render yourself liable?" "I am ready to obey," said Junot, "but I will go in my uniform or not at all; and that is honour enough for those rascally English." The commandant smiled, as he looked steadfastly at him. "But they will kill you," replied he. "What is that to you? you don't know me well enough to fret after me, and as for myself, 'tis all one to me. Well, I may go as I am, may not I?" He then put his hand into his cartridge-box. "Well, with my sword and these pills, at any rate the conversation shall not flag, if those fellows have any thing to say to me." He then set off singing.

"What is that young man's name?" asked the superior officer, as soon as he was gone. "Junot." "He is sure to get forward." The commandant then noted down his name in his pocket-book. This was already an opinion of great weight, for the reader will easily have guessed that the officer of artillery was Napoleon.

A few days afterwards, being at the same battery of the Sans-Culottes, Bonaparte asked for some one who could write a good hand. Junot stepped out of the ranks and offered his service. Bonaparte recognised in him the serjeant who had already attracted his notice. He told him to place himself somewhere to write a letter, which he would dictate. Junot chose the corner of the battery. Scarcely had he finished the letter when a bomb, fired by the English, burst at the distance of ten paces and covered him, as well as the letter, with mould. "Capital!" said Junot, laughing, "we wanted some sand to dry the ink."

Bonaparte fixed his eyes on the young serjeant; he was quite calm, and had not even started. This circumstance decided his

fortune. He continued with the commandant of the artillery, and did not return to his corps. Afterwards, when the city was taken and Bonaparte appointed General, Junot asked no other reward for his good conduct during the siege, but to be appointed his aide-de-camp,* preferring an inferior rank to that which he might have had by remaining in the corps; but in this case he should have been obliged to leave Bonaparte, and Junot could not make up his mind to that.

Junot was soon attached to his General with a devotedness that became adoration. Without taking the full measure of the giant who was before him, his penetrating mind set him down for a great man. I subjoin an extract from a letter, the original of which is in my possession; it was written in 1794, when Junot's father, alarmed at the resolution of his son, asked him for information concerning the man to whose fortunes he had attached himself. "Why have you left the commandant Laborde?† Why have you left your corps? Who is this General Bonaparte? Where has he served? Nobody knows him here."

Junot answered his father, and explained to him why he had preferred the service of the staff, especially that active service which he was likely to have with his General, to the more tardy results that would have attended his remaining with his battalion. He then added: "You ask me who is this General Bonaparte. I might answer in the words of Santeuil:

Pour savoir ce qu'il est il faut être lui-même;‡

but thus much will I tell you, that as far as I can judge, he is one of those men of whom nature is sparing, and whom she throws into the world but once in a century."

When Napoleon set out for Egypt he passed through Burgundy on his way to Toulon. He stopped at Dijon, where my father-in-law then was, and the latter then showed him the letter which I just quoted.

"Monsieur Junot," said the General, "this only serves to confirm me in my conviction of your son's attachment to me. He has given me strong proofs of it, which have deeply touched me. You and he may therefore rely upon it that I will use all my power and influence to advance him in our adventurous career."

* Junot and Muiron, the latter of whom afterwards perished so unfortunately, were the first aides-de-camp that Bonaparte ever had.

† Since general of division and commandant of Lisbon at the time of the conquest. It was he who commanded in Oporto, when Marshal Soult suffered himself to be surprised by the English, conceiving that it was the Swiss regiment which was crossing the river.

‡ In order to know what he is, you must be the man himself.

My father-in-law had then no occasion to ask, who this *General Bonaparte* was. A quarter of an hour after this conversation, what Bonaparte had said to him was written in his pocket-book, and put into his left pocket, as near as possible to his heart. His adoration of Napoleon became, from that moment, almost as profound as that of his son.

Bonaparte kept the promise which he had made to Junot's father: he was to him a kind and useful patron: but then there were important obligations on the other side. We have already seen that Junot, deeply concerned at the arrest and accusation of Bonaparte, wanted to share his capitivity; that he was repulsed from the prison by Napoleon himself, who convinced him that he might be of more use to him by remaining at liberty. We see, in fact, that the defence of Napoleon, addressed to the representatives of the people, Albitte and Salicetti, who had caused him to be apprehended, was Junot's writing: there are merely a few notes to it in Bonaparte's hand. After the liberation of the General, Junot accompanied him to Paris. There he constantly shared his poverty, and always divided with him what he received from his family.

"The galleons are not yet arrived," Bonaparte would say to my mother, when he called to see her, with a long face, and a grey frock-coat, which has since become so famous, but was then a very shabby concern; "the Burgundy diligence has not yet arrived. If it do not come to-night, we shall have no dinner to-morrow, at least if you don't give us one, Madame Permon." What Napoleon called the galleons, was a remittance of two or three hundred francs, which Junot's mother now and then sent to her son. This he divided with the General. "And I always have the larger share," said Bonaparte.

When Napoleon, after the 4th of October, was invested with the command of the army of the interior he took other aides-de-camp. Marmont was one of them; and at this period, he, Junot, and Muiron, were the privileged persons of his staff. Junot and Muiron were on the most intimate terms. They were for some time the only two officers attached to General Bonaparte. Their friendship was not affected by the addition of Marmont to their little staff, though, as I have already observed, Junot and he had been educated at the same college.

It was a very remarkable point in Junot's character, or rather in his heart, that he was as weak and superstitious in regard to his dearest friends, as he was rash and reckless of his own person; so that whenever a battle was at hand, he was distressed about the fate of his friends till he saw them again. On the evening before the

the door of the cabinet of the General-in-Chief. The General opened his door without being heard; he made a sign to be silent, and, coming up softly, laid hold of the fine light head of hair which the young aide-de-camp then had, and pulled it sharply. The pain was so acute that Junot could not suppress a faint cry; he smiled, but his face turned pale as death, and then alarmingly red. The General withdrew his hand; it was covered with blood!

To a brilliant and creative imagination, Junot joined an acute understanding, that was most prompt in seizing any new idea the moment it presented itself to him. He learned every thing with inconceivable rapidity. He was very ready at composing verses,* was an excellent actor, and wrote wonderfully well. His temper was warm, sometimes passionate, but never was he coarse or brutal; and, during the thirteen years of our union, I never witnessed such scenes as that which is described in the Memorial of St. Helena; the Emperor could not have made such an assertion, or, in absence of mind, he must have mentioned one name instead of another. The picture of Junot, running about in his handsome hotel, as he is alleged to have done in the Memorial, sword in hand, to pay his creditors, is absolutely ludicrous to all who were acquainted with Junot, and knew how anxious he was to act in harmony with the elevated post which he occupied. This post, formerly so eminent under the Bourbons, was infinitely more important under the Emperor. The Governor of Paris had the command of nearly eighty thousand men; he was the only governor who ever had such great power, extending to Blois, and I believe even to Tours. All officers of distinction, foreign or French, who passed through Paris, were received by him. Every person of any renown who came to France was admitted to the hospitalities of the Governor of Paris; and, from the first day of his nomination, Junot strove to imitate the Duke of Brissac, if not in his two queues and his white scarf, at least in the politeness of his manners. This desire of standing well in his intercourse with the social world dates even much further back, notwithstanding Junot's fondness for the republic, and his aversion to ancient customs. I will subjoin an example.

When all the world was emigrating, and the revolutionary tempest

* Here is a specimen. Playing one evening at chess with Queen Hortense, then Mademoiselle Beauharnais, after several games which he lost out of complaisance, Junot wrote these lines on the chess-board:

Dans ce beau jeu je vois l'emblême
De tout ce que vous inspirez:
Fou celui qui vous dira "J'aime,"
Roi celui que vous aimerez.

began to roar over every head, Madame de Brionne, mother of the Prince de Lambesc and the Prince de Vaudemont, was stopped, when attempting to leave France, at a town, which I believe to be Châlons, where Junot happened to be with his regiment. It was said that Madame de Brionne was carrying with her the crown diamonds; she was the mother of the Prince de Lambesc, whose name was held in abhorrence by the people, for his affair at the Tuileries; she belonged, moreover, to the house of Lorraine, and that was enough to render her suspected. She was, therefore, apprehended; but, thanks to Junot, this measure, which might have assumed a most alarming character for the object of it, was productive of no other unpleasant result than the mere fact of her apprehension. Madame de Brionne was conveyed to the best inn in the town, and Junot persuaded the mayor's officers to go themselves and examine her. "She is a woman," said he; "you do not arrest her by virtue of a warrant, since you have no commission to do so; but you act out of patriotism; you have received information upon which you act: so far all is right. Consider, however, that your information may be false, and that your action then becomes the more vexatious, inasmuch as there is no just cause for it: you must act, then, as if you doubt whether you be right; and, besides, she is a woman, and we are Frenchmen."

Junot was cheered with huzzas, and, in consequence of this harangue, it was resolved to proceed to the noble traveller, who, not having been forewarned, had well nigh marred every thing. She had thrown herself on a bed, upon pretext of fatigue, but probably to avoid the ceremonial of bows and courtesies: she shrunk from the idea of desiring people, such as she then saw, to sit down in her presence. By a very simple accident, however, her stratagem was thwarted. The mayor being absent from the town, there came in his stead an extremely vulgar fellow, who, on entering the room, threw himself into an arm-chair, saying, "I beg your pardon, *citoyenne;* but I am heavy, you see (he was full two hundred weight), and by your leave I will sit down."

At this intrusion Madame de Brionne half raised herself on the bed, and lifted up her head with an expression which gave her a most gigantic stature of twenty cubits—"By what right, Sir, do you interrupt my journey?" said she to the fat man who acted the mayor. "Is this the liberty people now enjoy in France? I insist upon your suffering me to proceed this instant." The fat man made no other reply to this application than to ask Madame de Brionne who she was and whence she came.

In relating this scene to me, Junot said: "Never shall I forget the

expression of Madame de Brionne's face; it was not indignation; it was an almost unknown sentiment: it was stupefaction, madness. . . . She, Madame de Brionne, to be interrogated! Not only her name to be asked, but who she was! 'After all,' said the man of the commune, 'we must know what is your profession.' Madame de Brionne returned no answer, but it was evident how severely she suffered from the constraint. A young female who was near her seemed in a whisper to be striving to soothe her. At length, when she had been questioned for the third time as to her name and quality, she raised herself with that dignity which never fails to awe when it is inspired by the feeling of what one really is, and exclaimed, 'Marie Louise de Rohan, Countess of Brionne! As to the charge which you have the stupidity rather than the infamy to allege against me . . . . show them my baggage,' continued she, turning to a valet-de chambre; 'they will see that the house of Lorraine possesses wealth without having occasion to rob the house of France.'"

"I was exceedingly pained at this scene," said Junot, "and when the clumsy booby had thoroughly convinced himself that Madame de Brionne had nothing with her that could even cause her to be suspected, I said sharply, that she might be allowed to take some rest before she resumed her journey, which she wanted to do immediately. At any rate, that woman had a noble and dignified courage, which excited a lively interest in me, and I strove to screen her from the inconveniences of her situation."

Madame de Brionne was too much accustomed to good society not to be immediately aware of the attentions paid to her by Junot, which never ceased till her departure; and at a moment when she thought she should not be overheard, she said to Junot, "It must be very painful to you, sir, to wear that dress and live with such people. It is no doubt your father whose opinions . . . . Alas! in these disastrous times it is no uncommon thing to see persons belonging to our class joining the rabble."

"Madame," said Junot, interrupting her, with a smile, "I ought to prevent you from proceeding, and assure you that my father and myself are of the same opinion; and I must confess that I am a plebeian and a stanch republican."

The young soldier bowed. "Well, then," said Madame de Brionne to the young lady who had previously spoken to her, "there are many of our young coxcombs at Versailles who would not have been either so polite or so attentive to a woman of my age."

"I heard it distinctly," said Junot, "though she spoke in a whisper; and you will hardly believe that one of the things which most en-

gaged my thoughts, after she had spoken of it herself, was to inquire her age. She was still a superb woman; her arms and hands were admirably beautiful."

Madame de Brionne was about fifty at the time of this adventure; if anything, rather more than less.

"Sir," said she to Junot at the moment of her departure, "accept this token of remembrance; I hope that it may serve to remind you of one who, on her part, will never forget what you have had the kindness to do for her." This token of remembrance was a snuff-box of white shell, with a portrait of Madame de Brionne. Junot received it with warm expressions of thanks, and always kept it, notwithstanding his wandering life. A singular little adventure, not a sequel to, but a consequence of, that which I have just related, occurred some years afterwards.

Some time after the victory of the Tagliamento, shortly before the treaty of Leoben, Junot being at Clagenfurth with the General-in-chief, received a visit from a young German officer taken prisoner in the battle. He was handsome and a man of polished manners, but spoke French very ill. In other respects he was quite a gentleman, for he introduced himself as a relative of Madame de Brionne, in whose name he solicited Colonel Junot's good offices.

From what Baron de Steyer told Junot, it appears that Madame de Brionne had always kept her eye upon him, and that the newspapers, in which his name frequently occurred, had furnished her with honourable intelligence concerning him. She had recommended to the Baron, in case he should meet with such a misfortune as to be taken prisoner, to mention her name to Colonel Junot, and solicit his influence. The confidence of Madame de Brionne was not disappointed. Junot received the young officer in the most cordial manner; he asked and obtained for him his liberation on parole before the exchange of prisoners. My husband was much pleased with this mark of remembrance on the part of Madame de Brionne,* and justly so: for what is more amiable than to seize an occasion for a good action, and to prove that one has relied upon you?

* As it is probable that I shall make no further mention of Madame de Brionne, I shall here introduce a little anecdote of her eldest son, the Prince de Vaudemont. Every body knows that he was far from being like his mother and brother, and still less like his wife, who was and still is generally beloved. She was very ill, and Louis XVI., who took a lively interest in her welfare, one day asked the Prince de Vaudemont, "How is the Princess? What does Portal think of her?"—"Why, 'faith, Sire, I should not like to be in her skin." Now only consider that this answer was given with the utmost *sang-froid*, and in a tone and accent absolutely inimitable.

This little story is not foreign to what precedes it, as the reader may perceive. The young man to whom it relates was the same who, from his fiery courage and impetuosity of character obtained, a few months afterwards, in the field of battle, the appellation of *La Tempête*, from his brave comrades. It is to be presumed that this politeness, which must have been innate in Junot, for it could not have been taught him, was in the sequel rather developed than stifled by the remarkable circumstances in which he was placed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Departure of Junot for Egypt—A general at twenty-seven—Injustice of the public towards Berthier—Mutual relations of the generals of the army of Egypt—Parties—Quarrel between Lanusse and Junot—Duel by torch-light on the bank of the Nile—Remarkable observations of Napoleon—His horror of duels—Letter from Bonaparte to Junot—Junot in Egypt after the departure of Bonaparte—Letter from Kleber—Departure of Junot—Junot and General Dumuy taken by the English—Indignation of an English captain, and noble conduct of Nelson—Lady Hamilton's oranges—Intimacy of Junot and Sir Sydney Smith—Junot returns to France and appointed Governor of Paris.

I HAVE traced the life of Junot from his entrance into the battalion of the Côte d'Or; I have carried him to Longwy, Toulon, Italy, constantly devoted to Napoleon, as Napoleon was beloved by many of his aides-de-camp. Many generals have been strongly attached to the Emperor; many of them, by the ascendancy of a mighty genius, though they were republicans, continued to love him, even after his coronation, and to serve him faithfully: but nothing ever approached that blind, that passionate devotedness, which several of his officers, at the head of whom was Junot, cherished for him. It was a fault in Napoleon not to believe the reality of the purity of this sentiment, and a still greater to show that he disbelieved it.

Junot was appointed general in Egypt. This promotion which is always a desirable thing, especially at Junot's age (he was then twenty-seven) was not so for him. He had to leave the man to whom he was affectionately attached, and was even removed from under his observation: the army was not numerous, the general officers had not the choice of their cantonments, and they were obliged to go whithersoever the service required.

It is well known that there was a complete schism between the

chiefs of the army of Egypt; it was the camp of Agramant. Napoleon's party was the most numerous; but this division was extremely prejudicial. The personal danger of each party rendered it more irritable, more inflexible, especially towards the opposite faction. Kleber, Damas, and a great number of generals of extraordinary merit in other respects, affected to withdraw themselves from the authority of the General-in-chief.

Junot, as soon as he was appointed general, thought to earn a speedy immortality. But at that time it was not favour that made our generals; there was an emulation in glory, and promotion was attainable only by a brilliant achievement, a wound, or a skilful manœuvre. No doubt, one might adduce some contrary examples, and name some incapable persons elevated through favour and patronage to high posts, from which the Emperor himself was subsequently obliged to dismiss them. But, it may be asserted that, in general, at the time of which I am treating, more than at any other period, excepting perhaps during the empire, merit was exclusively rewarded.

In this particular, as in almost every other, the Emperor was to be admired. He might, agreeably to his ideas of ambition, have sought to make tools for himself, and have attempted it at any cost: but, let us examine all those whom he promoted; none of them were inefficient, but all possessed talents peculiar to themselves. Berthier, who had deceived the friendship and betrayed the confidence of Bonaparte, did not merit the epithet which he applied to him in the Memorial; it was a judgment dictated by a wounded spirit. Berthier was a hard worker, exact to the minutest matter in the details of his department, a point of the utmost consequence to the *scribbling** portion of the army, always ready to answer the call of the General-in-chief. Amid the scorching sands of Egypt, in the ice-bound deserts of Russia, Berthier was always so dressed as to be ready to appear before the General or Emperor, at any hour of the night, however late. He was never found at fault. Afterwards he was, most certainly, far from being a bad man. He did good offices with the Emperor for those whom the ill humour of the latter but too frequently ruffled. Poor Berthier! his tragic death ought to have obtained pardon for him. Not but that I think his fault immense, for I am far from excusing his ingratitude, in my eyes the most unpardonable of vices.

Among the generals who had placed themselves in absolute hostile opposition to the General-in-chief, was Lanusse, the brother of him

* This was the Emperor's favourite word. I have often heard him say that the ancients were our superiors in this respect, that they had not a second army of *scribblers* in their train.

who lately commanded at Besançon. One day, an expression so horrible, and at the same time so alarming for the safety of the army, was reported to Junot, that the favourable prepossessions with which the bravery of Lanusse had inspired him were from that moment utterly destroyed. "I hated him at last," said Junot to me, when relating the circumstances of their quarrel. Amicable appearances were nevertheless kept up, but their hearts were estranged.* One day Murat, wishing to reconcile the two generals, invited them to dine with him, together with Lannes, Bessières, and I believe Lavalette, who was then aide-de-camp to the General-in-chief.

Dinner passed off agreeably, and the party afterwards went to play. During a game at *bouillotte*, the conversation turned on a military operation which the army was about to make, when Lanusse suffered a sarcastic smile to escape him; it exasperated Junot. Bessières, who sat next to him, kept him quiet for a few moments. Lanusse, misinterpreting the tranquillity which prevailed around him, continued talking about the state of the army in very indecorous terms. In the midst of his observations, he stopped short, and addressing Junot, "Junot," said he, "lend me ten louis! I am bankrupt."—"I have no money before me," replied Junot drily. As he had a heap of gold before him, Lanusse eyeing him steadfastly, rejoined, "How am I to take your answer, Junot?"—"Just as you please."—"I asked you to lend me ten of the louis that are lying before you."—"And I answer, that although there is money before me, there is none for a traitor like you."—"None but a scoundrel could use such an expression," cried Lanusse, overcome with rage.

In a moment all were on their legs. "Junot! Lanusse!" cried they, endeavouring to soothe them, for, at the epithet employed by Lanusse, Junot had become furious. All at once he appeared calm. "Hearken, Lanusse," said he, in a voice the mildness of which formed a strange contrast with his choleric trembling, "hearken to me, I called you a traitor; I don't think you are so.† You called me a scoundrel; you don't think me one; for we are both brave. But, look you, we must fight; one of us must die. I hate you, because you hate the man whom I love and admire as much as God, if not more.‡ We must

* They had previously been intimate, and I know that Lanusse had even laid my husband under obligation. I take pleasure in acknowledging this.

† Lanusse was remarkable for bravery, and one of the most distinguished officers of the army of Egypt.

‡ I have been advised to omit this expression, but I have not done so, because it was actually used by Junot, and, being acquainted with his religious creed, I know how to estimate it: he was not pious, but he was a believer.

fight, and that immediately. I swear that before I go to bed to-night this affair shall be settled!"

All the witnesses of the scene were sensible that such words as had been exchanged demanded blood, and even life. But, what was to be done? The General had proscribed duels; he would not have any in his army. If the affair were to be deferred till the next day he would know of it, and then it would be impossible to settle it. Murat's garden was spacious; it sloped down to the Nile. Torches were lighted, and there they might fight that very instant. It was nine o'clock and quite dark.

"What weapon shall we take?" said Junot. "A pretty question!" said Lanusse. "Pistols, to be sure." Every one looked at him in astonishment. He had been insulted; according to the laws of duelling he had a right to choose the weapons that should be employed. All were therefore surprised that he should prefer one which, in Junot's hand, was sure to prove fatal. It is well known that he was the most expert marksman with the pistol, not only in France but in Europe. At twenty-five paces he never missed an ace, and could always cut the ball in two, and that exactly in the middle, against the blade of a knife. "I will not fight you with pistols," said he coolly to Lanusse; "you are no marksman, you could not hit a barn-door. We ought to fight upon equal terms. We have our swords; let us go."

Bessières, who was Junot's second with Murat, whispered to him that he was a foolish fellow, as Lanusse was a capital swordsman, and he might perhaps stand no chance with him. "Consider too," said Murat, "that it is for life or death." Junot would not listen to any thing. They proceeded to the garden, and by the way Lanusse again raised his voice, and employed some very offensive expressions with reference to Junot and the General-in-chief. "Lanusse," said Junot, "you are acting now like a man without heart, and yet you are a brave man: one would suppose you were trying to screw up your courage." Lanusse replied with a volley of abuse. Lannes silenced him. "Come along, Lanusse," said he in the energetic manner with which he adorned all he said; for at this period and even much later, I never heard him speak two words but the third was an oath. "Come along: hold your tongue, you are going to cut one another's throats—what the devil would you have more? All that you say to him now is positively thrown away."

When they were on the ground, the seconds examined it, and they had a good mind not to suffer the affair to take place on that spot. The Nile, after its periodical inundation, had left inequalities which were enough to trip a person up at every step. "If it were but day-

light!" said Murat. "But you cannot fight here."—"Come on!" said Junot, "this is children's play." Pulling off his coat, he drew his sword, and Lanusse did the same.

Junot was a good fencer. He was nimble, brave, and perfectly cool: but, wishing to finish the affair, and taking his opportunity, he made a stroke at Lanusse, which cut the crown of his hat and spent itself on his cheek. Had he been without a hat, he must have been killed. Taking advantage of the movement which had left Junot exposed, he gave him a back-handed cut, which laid open the abdomen, and made a wound, the scar of which was more than eight inches long. Junot was removed with great difficulty. The nature of the wound was most serious in a country where inflammation of the intestines is the chief thing to be dreaded. But he was surrounded by persons whose talents and friendship quickly alleviated his alarming situation.

The General-in-chief was furious the next morning, when Desgenettes, at Junot's desire, informed him of the occurrence. "What!" cried he, "are they determined to cut each other's throats? Must they go into the midst of the reeds of the Nile, to dispute among the crocodiles, and leave behind for them the body of the one that shall have fallen? Have they not enough then with the Arabs, the plague, and the Mamelukes? You deserve, Monsieur Junot," said he, as though his old aide-de-camp had been present, "you richly deserve putting under arrest for a month, when you get well." Such were the very words of Bonaparte. He went to see Junot a considerable time after the affair, that is to say, when Junot was almost convalescent; for, at first, Napoleon would not see him, saying, that he was more culpable than Lanusse. However, the very next day, when apprized of the result and causes of the duel, he exclaimed, "My poor Junot! wounded for me! But then, the idiot! why did he not fight with pistols?"

When Bonaparte left Egypt, Junot was at Suez, where he commanded. It is well known how secret the departure was kept. How kind and affectionate is the letter which he sent on this occasion to Junot! It is as follows:

"*Bonaparte, General-in-chief, member of the Institute, to the General of brigade Junot.*

"I am leaving Egypt, my dear Junot, and you are too far from the place of embarkation for me to take you with me. But I shall leave orders with Kleber to let you set out in the course of October. Be assured that, in whatever place and in whatever situation I may

be, I will give you positive proofs of the affectionate friendship which I have vowed to you.

Health and friendship,

BONAPARTE."

Kleber wished to keep Junot, but he would not stay. He could not meet with a vessel to return to Europe; and it was painful to him to be far distant from his country and from the man who alone had enabled him to endure the separation. At length he spoke out, with such energy and feeling, that Kleber gave him permission to depart in the following letter:

"*Kleber, General-in-chief, to the General of brigade Juneau.**

"The feeling of gratitude which you express so well, and which attaches you to General Bonaparte, only augments the esteem which I entertain for you. You shall go, General, and I have ordered General Damas to furnish you with a passport immediately: it grieves me exceedingly that I cannot give you in any other way the assurance of my sincere and cordial attachment. KLEBER."

Notwithstanding the apparent frankness of this letter, Kleber caused his departure to be attended with unpleasant circumstances. A report was circulated in the army, that Junot was carrying away the treasures found in the Pyramids by the General-in-chief. "He could not carry them away himself," such was the language held to the soldiers, "and so the man who possesses all his confidence, is now taking them to him." The matter was carried so far, that several subalterns and soldiers proceeded to the shore, and some of them went on board the merchantman which was to sail with Junot the same evening. They rummaged about, but found nothing: at length they came to a prodigious chest, which ten men could not move, between decks. "Here is the treasure!" cried the soldiers, "here is our pay that has been kept from us above a year; where is the key?" Junot's valet, an honest German, shouted to them in vain, with all his might, that the chest did not belong to his *chenerâl*. They would not listen to him. Unluckily, Junot, who was not to embark till evening, was not then on board. The mutineers seized a hatchet, and began to cut away at the chest, which they would soon have broken up, had not the ship's carpenter come running quite out of breath. "What the devil

* An orthographical blunder would be nothing more than one might expect of Kleber, who did not pride himself on being able to write French: but it is surprising that he did not know how to spell Junot's name.

are you at?" cried he, "mad fellows, that you are; stop! don't destroy my chest—here is the key." He opened it immediately, and lo!—the tools of the master carpenter of the ship.

A scene like this wounded Junot to his heart's core. To be suspected of such baseness was to him a deep injury; but to suspect his General of a *crime* of which he was less capable than any other—he, the father of the soldier! Junot deemed the charge beneath both of them. He could have proved that he had been obliged to borrow a thousand crowns for his return to Europe; but he should soon see again his own dear country, the man who was not less dear, and his family. In short, the feelings that crowded upon his ardent soul (so well fitted to enjoy all the happiness that he anticipated), neutralized his indignation: he quitted that ancient Egypt, from which he carried away nothing except glory, without regret, and without remorse; and, turning his face towards Europe, thought of nothing but France.

The odious calumny, the stupid invention, relative to the treasures of the Pharaohs, had, meanwhile, found believers elsewhere, as well as in the army. The English, for example, had been simple enough to give credit to this story. A ship was even cruising off Alexandria; and the merchantman in which Junot had sailed was obliged to bring-to at the first summons of the Theseus man of war, Captain Steele; while Junot and his aide-de-camp, Captain Lallemand, had not the power to make the least resistance, how well disposed soever they might have been to do so.*

Captain Steele was the most impertinent of men, and every body knows that, when the English take up the profession of impertinence, they are adepts in it. Junot was a prisoner, and an unhappy prisoner: all that could aggravate the pain of his disagreeable situation was, probably, discussed overnight, in the head of the captain, that it might be put in practice the next morning. Junot had with him General Dumuy, the oldest general of division in the French army; he was no longer young, and was invested with a rank which ought to have ensured him not only respect but honour, especially among military men. If he were a numskull, Captain Steele was less capable of discovering it, as Englishmen themselves told me, than any body else. Well, poor General Dumuy was not only ill-used, which was cruel, but hoaxed, which was infamous. Junot would not put up with any jokes, and I have no need to observe, that it would have been dangerous to make the experiment with him. Captain Lallemand, on his part, was not more complaisant: one day he wellnigh threw overboard

* They left Alexandria at eight in the evening, and were taken about midnight by the English. "We were waiting for you," said the latter.

a petty officer, who had amused himself by playing him a *trick*, as he called it. Accordingly, Junot and he were, at least, respected.

At length, after enduring, for four months, a treatment which daily became more harsh and insupportable, Junot spoke out, and with such effect that Captain Steele was obliged to tack about, and carry his victims to Jaffa, to be delivered up to Commodore Sir Sydney Smith. I shall speak of Sir Sydney by and by; at present I shall only say, that he was most polite to the prisoners, and particularly to Junot, but he could not keep them, and forwarded them by way of Cyprus to Arnetta, to be thence despatched to Toulon, in the ship Le Vaillant; but it was necessary that an English officer should first go to Palermo to receive the orders of Nelson, who was there with Lady Hamilton.

The day after Le Vaillant had anchored in the harbour of Palermo, a very elegant barge, manned by a dozen rowers, dressed in white, and wearing black velvet caps, ornamented with a silver leopard, came to reconnoitre the frigate. Junot was in his cabin at the moment with General Dumuy. The captain of Le Vaillant went down to them, and told them with the more arrogance, because he fancied that he was backed, "Come upon deck, gentlemen; our hero, the great Admiral Nelson, wishes to see the French prisoners." Junot eyed the captain, then turning his head, he appeared to be looking round about him. "Am I to understand that it is to me and the General that you are speaking?" said he. The captain bowed. "And have you the courage to execute this commission with so much impertinence? Well; take back this answer, at least as far as I and my officers are concerned: go, and tell your Admiral Nelson, who to me is neither a hero nor a great man, for I am accustomed to a measure that would be far too large for him, go and tell him, that I am not his prisoner, but the prisoner of his government: that were I his prisoner, I would not obey an order given with the brutality with which you would treat curious beasts that you might have brought from Egypt, and of which you were the keeper. If Admiral Nelson wishes to see me, he knows where to find me. Say further, he is my superior, his rank is higher than mine; had he civilly expressed a desire to see me, I would have gone to him that instant. Now the insult is offered, it is too late for him to recede. I pretend not to impose my opinions upon any one," continued Junot, turning to Dumuy, who, from the commencement of the action, kept close behind him, jogging his elbow, and pulling a face that was enough to make the merriest cry, or the most sorrowful laugh. "I have said what I thought, and what I would do, that is all: you are at liberty to act as you please."

The good man, if he had had his own way, would have gone upon

deck, and walked about somewhat after the manner of a white bear in his den. The captain delivered Junot's answer to Nelson, who had a spirit to feel the full force of it. Junot, in his spleen, had said what he was far from thinking, for he admired Nelson, and did not conceal it; but how can you abstain entirely from offensive language, when a victorious enemy would insult you? It is to be presumed that Junot's conduct was appreciated by Nelson; for the same evening he sent him a large basket filled with fruit, preserves, and some bottles of claret. Lady Hamilton had added some oranges to the present. Junot rightly thought that it would show bad taste to refuse it: he therefore accepted it, and stamped his thanks with a gratitude which he really felt. After all, if what he had said to the captain was faithfully reported to the Admiral, this tacit reparation of his affront, or perhaps of that offered by the captain of the Theseus, argues a great share of magnanimity in his character. Nelson, however, annulled Sir Sydney Smith's orders for the return of the prisoners to France, and they were conveyed to Mahon, there to await the answer of the Admiralty. That answer could not be doubtful, but it might be delayed some time, and to remain longer under the yoke of the captain of the frigate was beyond the bounds of human patience.

Sir Sydney Smith appeared to Junot under an aspect which, though different from that of Nelson, was not more encouraging in regard to social life, and the intercourse which there must be between two men, living, if not under the same roof, on the same floor, and which was about to be established between them. General Bonaparte was not mistaken in regard to the real cause of the disasters consequent upon the long resistance of St. Jean d'Acre. In his mind, Sir Sydney Smith and those disasters were inseparable. Those around him, who so easily caught the reflection of his enmities and his friendships, when, like Junot in particular, they lived in his life, beheld in Sir Sydney a man to whom General Bonaparte had a strong dislike, and to whom, of course, they took a dislike also. "Nevertheless," said Junot to me one day, "the Emperor always regarded Sir Sydney Smith as a man of honour, and he said as much; only he thought him mad; and he could not comprehend, he said, how a sensible man could attempt such insane things."

To two men formed to esteem each other, the first moments were of course irksome: but this did not last long. Sir Sydney and Junot, when they became acquainted, conceived a high esteem for one another. Junot said that Sir Sydney was chivalry personified, with all its bravery and generosity. They passed together about two months, which would have appeared short to Junot, had he not been anxious

to return to France. Every consideration was absorbed by that desire, which became a real home-sickness. Sir Sydney perceived it, and strove to expedite his return to France, as if he had been his own brother. It was to the active interference of Sir Sydney Smith that Junot was indebted for the cartel of exchange, the original of which I have carefully preserved. It is scarcely necessary to remark that ten English prisoners were released in exchange for him.

Junot continued to cherish the most affectionate regard for the Commodore. Notwithstanding the war, they wrote and sent presents to one another. In spite of all his efforts, however, Sir Sydney could not obtain the entire exchange of Junot, who could not serve against England till the business was finally settled.*

CHAPTER XXIX.

The returned emigrants—Portraits from nature—MM. de Bouillé and Madame de Contades—Drawing-room scenes—My mother's ball—The rival beauties—Madame Leclerc's ears—My mother's conversation with Paulette—MM. de Perigord—Despreaux's assemblies.

I WILL devote this chapter to some details respecting individuals who formed a portion of my mother's circle of acquaintance, and who were distinguished in Parisian society, after their return from emigration.

Among the ladies who had recently returned to France, and who were frequent visitors at my mother's house, there was one who is still vividly present to my recollection as though I had seen her only a few days since. This was Madame de Contades, the daughter and sister of the MM. de Bouillé, who distinguished themselves at the affair of Varennes. Madame de Contades was a person whose appearance never failed to make a profound impression at first sight. She was not remarkable for beauty, but there was something very pleasing about her. There was an expression in her look and smile, which I never observed in any but one woman besides herself. She was not gloomy, far from it; and yet one could scarcely venture to

* The Editor cannot forbear expressing his conviction, that the statements which the present chapter contains relative to the conduct of the captains of the Theseus and Le Vaillant, and "our hero, the great Admiral Nelson," are highly coloured by national antipathy.

laugh in her presence, unless she first set the example. When she turned round her goddess-like head, crowned with luxuriant black hair, and cast a look at any one, that look was a command which exacted obedience. Her hatred of Bonaparte was exceedingly amusing. She would not grant him the merit of deserving his military fame: "Pshaw!" she would say when my mother spoke of his victories in Italy and Egypt, "I could do as much with a look." She was no less diverting when Bonaparte's sisters came under her review. She would not acknowledge the beauty of Madame Leclerc, any more than the glory of her brother. Her eccentric opinion on this subject once gave rise to a tragi-comic incident at my mother's house.

Bonaparte had just departed for Egypt; and the different members of his family, bright with the reflections of the glory he had cast upon them, during his brief stay in Paris, had already commenced their novitiate of royalty. Madame Leclerc, who had a taste for absolute power, was nothing loth to unite the influence of her brother's reputation to that of her own beauty. That beauty indeed appeared so perfect, that nobody ever thought of disputing it. As her dominion as yet consisted only of beauty, she spared no pains to make the most of it; and in this she certainly succeeded, when she did not, as unfortunately too often happened, display the airs of an insufferable spoiled child. One evening my mother gave a ball at her residence in the Rue Sainte-Croix. She had invited, according to her custom, the most select society of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. As to the other party, the only individuals belonging to it were the Bonaparte family, and a few gentlemen, who, like M. de Trenis, were fine dancers, and were, for that reason, regularly invited by the few families who gave parties at that time.

Madame Leclerc informed us that she had prepared for the occasion a dress, which, to use her own expression, she expected would *immortalise her*. This dress was a subject of the most serious consideration with her, at least a week before she was destined to wear it, and she enjoined the strictest secrecy on Madame Germon and Charbonnier.* She requested permission to dress at our house, which she frequently did in order that she might enter the ball-room with her dress completely fresh and in all its beauty.

Only those who knew Madame Leclerc, at that time, can form any idea of the impression she produced on entering my mother's drawing-room. The head-dress consisted of *bandelettes* of a very soft kind of fur, of a tiger pattern. These *bandelettes* were surmounted by bunches

* A milliner and a hair-dresser, at that time much in favour.

of grapes in gold; but the hair was not dressed so high as it is now worn. She was a faithful copy of a Bacchante, such as are seen in antique statues or cameos; and in truth the form of Madame Leclerc's head, and the classic regularity of her features, emboldened her to attempt an imitation which would have been hazardous in most women. Her robe, of exquisitely fine India muslin, had a deep bordering of gold; the pattern was of grapes and vine-leaves. With this she wore a tunic of the purest Greek form, with a bordering similar to her dress, which displayed her fine figure to admirable advantage. This tunic was confined on the shoulders by cameos of great value. The sleeves, which were very short, were lightly gathered on small bands, which were also fastened with cameos. Her girdle, which was placed below the bosom, as is seen in the Greek statues, consisted of a gold band, the clasp of which was a superbly cut antique stone. She entered the drawing-room without her gloves, displaying her beautiful white round arms, which were adorned with bracelets, formed of gold and cameos. It is impossible to describe the effect her appearance produced. Her entrance seemed absolutely to illumine the room. The perfect harmony in every part of the beautiful whole, elicited a buzz of admiration, which was not very complimentary to the other ladies present. The gentlemen all thronged round her, as she advanced towards a seat which my mother had reserved for her, for Paulette was a particular favourite of my mother's, who indeed regarded her almost as her own child.

The ladies were all much piqued at the beauty and the elegant dress of Mademoiselle Bonaparte, the wife of General Leclerc. They whispered to one another, but loud enough to be heard by Paulette, that such an impudent display of extravagance was exceedingly unbecoming a woman who had been almost in starvation only three years before. But these expressions of female envy were speedily drowned by the admiration of the other sex.

The beauty of Madame de Contades, was now entirely eclipsed, and soon after Madame Leclerc's entrance she found herself abandoned by her circle of admirers; or if any of them approached her, it was only to make some provoking remark, complimentary to the charms of Paulette. "Give me your arm," said she to a gentleman near her, and the next moment the Diana-like figure of Madame de Contades was seen moving across the drawing-room, and advancing towards Madame Leclerc. The latter had withdrawn to my mother's boudoir, because, she said, the heat of the drawing-room, and the motion of the dancers, made her ill; though, I believe, the true reason was, that a long sofa in the boudoir afforded her the opportunity of displaying

her graceful figure and attitudes to the best advantage. This manœuvre, however, proved unlucky for her. The room was small and brilliantly lighted, and as Madame Leclerc reclined upon the sofa, a stream of light descended full upon her head. Madame de Contades looked at her attentively; and instead of making any of the ill-natured observations which had fallen from the other ladies, she first admired the dress, then the figure, then the face. Returning a second time to the *coiffure*, she expatiated on its taste and elegance; then suddenly turning to the gentleman on whose arm she was leaning, she exclaimed, "Ah, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! how unfortunate that such a pretty woman should be deformed! Did you never observe it! What a pity it is!"

Had these exclamations been uttered in the drawing-room, it is probable that the sound of the music and the dancing would have drowned Madame de Contades' voice, though she generally spoke in a pretty loud tone: as it was, every word resounded through the little *boudoir*, and the scarlet which suffused the face of Madame Leclerc was much too deep to improve her beauty.

Madame de Contades fixed her eyes of fire on Paulette, as if she would look her through, and the tone of compassion in which she uttered the words, "What a pity!" sufficiently informed Paulette that her triumph was at an end. All this (which perhaps I have described with too much prolixity) took place in the space of little more than a minute; but these details are necessary, to show the mode in which the attack was managed, and the success with which a woman of ingenuity may avenge her wounded vanity. "What is the matter?" inquired some one who stood near Madame Contades.—"The matter!" said she, "do you not see the two enormous ears which disfigure either side of her head. I declare if I had such a pair of ears, I would have them cut off, and I will advise Madame Leclerc to do so. There can be no harm in advising a woman to have her ears cut off."

All eyes were now turned towards Madame Leclerc's head; not as before, to admire it, but to wonder at the deformity with which its beauty was disfigured. The truth is, that nature must have been in one of her most capricious moods, when she placed two such ears on the right and left of a charming face. They were merely pieces of thin white cartilage, almost without any curling; but this cartilage was not enormous as Madame de Contades said; it was merely ugly, and its ugliness was the more conspicuous on account of the beautiful features with which it was contrasted. A young woman but little accustomed to society is easily embarrassed: this was the case with Madame Leclerc when she read in the faces of her surrounding ad-

mirers the effect produced by the remarks of Madame de Contades. The result of this little scene was, that Paulette burst into tears, and on the plea of indisposition retired before midnight. Next morning my mother went to see her. She of course said nothing about the ears, which were then concealed beneath a nightcap trimmed with lace; for Madame Leclerc was in the habit of receiving visits, even the most formal ones, in bed. She took her revenge by assailing Madame de Contades, whom she certainly did not spare. My mother allowed her to go on for some time, for she was aware that she had been deeply piqued. "I cannot imagine," said Madame Leclerc, "what can make that great tall may-pole such a favourite with all the men! I am sure there are many women much more attractive in the circle of your acquaintance. There was one who sat near her last evening in your drawing-room, whom I think much handsomer; and she was very well dressed too. She had a robe and Grecian tunic, just like mine. "But," added she, in as serious a tone as though she had been speaking of the most important affair in the world, "hers was embroidered in silver, and mine in gold. That did not become her: she is not fair enough for silver." Patience was not my mother's virtue; and on hearing this she rose from her chair, evidently displeased. "Paulette," said she, "my dear girl, you are crazy! absolutely crazy!" The person of whom Madame Leclerc was speaking, was a little fat woman, with a short neck, a turned up nose, and so extremely short-sighted that she was continually winking her eyes. In a word, she was the very reverse of Madame de Contades.

"I assure you, Madame Permon, I think Madame Chauvelin an elegant woman; she is clever too, without being satirical."—"Whether Madame Chauvelin be elegant or not, is a matter of very little consequence," replied my mother: "as to her cleverness, I know she has a good deal. But, my dear Paulette, you are strangely mistaken if you live in the belief that she is not satirical when any thing of a ridiculous kind presents itself to her notice. She can observe, short-sighted as she is." This affair set Madame Leclerc for a long time in violent hostility to Madame de Contades; though I am sure the latter lady never thought of it from the moment she put on her shawl to leave my mother's party.

About this period M. de Talleyrand had persuaded a great portion of his family to return from emigration. His two brothers, Archambaud and Bozon de Perigord, came to France. The former had been forced to fly to save his life, and left behind him a wife and three children. His wife died shortly after his departure. M. Louis Perigord, the eldest of his three children, was a man whose rare

qualities rendered him an ornament to society. He enjoyed the favour of Bonaparte, who knew how to appreciate merit.

There was a lady, a friend of my mother, who like her had the courage to receive company and give balls at this time. This was Madame de Caseaux, wife of the president of the Parliament of Bordeaux. She was a distant relation of M. de Talleyrand. She had an only daughter, Laure de Caseaux, who was then the richest heiress in France. The fortune of M. de Caseaux was estimated at eight or nine millions of francs. Madame de Caseaux occupied the Hotel de Perigord in the Rue l'Université, which now belongs to Marshal Soult. There she gave, in the suite of apartments on the ground floor, the first splendid balls which took place in Paris after the revolution. But these balls represented the Faubourg St. Germain in all its purity; and I do not recollect having seen the face of any individual of the opposite party, except Junot, and that not until after our marriage.

There was another house in Paris, at which good company and agreeable parties were to be met, though money was paid for admittance. This was the house of Despréaux, the fashionable dancing-master. I was his pupil; and at first these assemblies consisted only of his pupils; but they soon became so fashionable that Despréaux was obliged to remove to a larger house in order to receive all who wished to subscribe to them. It was there I first met Mademoiselle Perregaux, before she was married to General Marmont. She used to be accompanied by a sort of governante, who, instead of having any control over her, appeared to be entirely submissive to her authority. Mademoiselle Perregaux was pretty, but my mother could never reconcile herself to the freedom of her manners. Madame Bonaparte sometimes brought her daughter to Despréaux's assemblies. Hortense de Beauharnais was then a lovely girl; but I will take another opportunity of drawing her portrait: it deserves to be more than a light sketch.

CHAPTER XXX.

The 18th of Fructidor—Hoche—Probable manner of his death—Madame de Re——e, and Madame Tallien—Flags presented to the Directory by Junot—Madame Bonaparte—Junot escorts her to Italy—Mademoiselle Louise.

After the 18th Fructidor we had a new reign of terror, which spread consternation through all our circle, and several of our friends, whose names were included in the declaration of Duverne de Presle, were obliged to leave Paris.

An event which took place immediately after the 18th of Fructidor overwhelmed us with grief, for we were intimately acquainted with the relatives and friends of the victim who was sacrificed. I here allude to the death of Hoche, which may be regarded as an event in the history of our revolution. The loss of Joubert and Hoche have usually been regarded as military misfortunes, like the fate of Marceaux, and subsequently of Desaix, but the case was different. With his military talent, Hoche combined extensive abilities of various kinds, and he was a citizen as well as a soldier. When he was sent to La Vendée, he quelled dissension, more perhaps by his talents and conciliating manners than by his sword, though he could use it well. Like Joubert, he loved and revered his counrty. I did not know much of General Hoche personally, but since his death I have been furnished with some curious details respecting him. When his death was made known, the public voice rose in an accusing outcry against the Directory. I have paid great attention to the circumstances which attended the death of Hoche; I have carefully examined the events which preceded the 18th of Fructidor, and compared them with valuable documents, which are in my possession. I am satisfied that Hoche was the constant object of the hatred of a party, then unfortunately powerful, though acting in the shade. The most serious charge was brought against him, and yet he was not guilty. It was discovered that the sum of eight hundred thousand francs had been embezzled, and it was alleged that the commander of the army of the Sambre and the Meuse had divided it among the officers of his staff. A lady for whom Hoche cherished a deep interest, and who is still living, received from him, at the time, letters in which he begged her to raise

some money by way of loan at any price. "Above all," said he in one of these letters, "I should blush if France knew that one of the Generals-in-chief of her armies should be obliged to borrow money to replace the horses which have been killed under him by the enemy's bullets."

Nothing, it appears to me, can be more conclusive than the language of a man thus addressing a woman who possessed his entire confidence. The lady to whom these letters are addressed, is, as I have already observed, still living; she resides in Paris, and she favoured me, only a few days before these pages were written, with another sight of the correspondence to which she attaches the highest value.

In another of these letters, General Hoche says: "Do they wish me to come to Paris to renew the scandalous scene of the 18th of June?* If they do I will come, and in my turn tear to pieces their embroidered coats. Let them not provoke me." Alas! the unfortunate General ought not to have provoked an enemy who was alike cowardly, criminal and feeble. Scarcely one month elapsed after the date of this last letter, and Hoche was no more. An almost unanimous voice pronounced sentence of murder againt those who ought to have placed the civic crown on the head of Hoche, instead of consigning him to the grave. As to my own opinion, I entertain a firm conviction that General Hoche died by assassination. I deemed it necessary to say thus much relative to this brave man. His tragical death forms a remarkable event in our revolutionary history. I must now revert to a few circumstances of anterior date, for the better explanation of some facts which are to follow.

Shortly before the Revolution my father, in the course of his financial business, was engaged in rather a curious affair, which, at the time, was but little known, because one of the two parties concerned belonged to the Polignac family. While this affair was pending, my mother was introduced to some of the individuals concerned, among others to Madame de Re——c, a natural daughter of the Marquis de St. A———n. When, in 1796, the revolutionary troubles had somewhat subsided, and people who had been dispersed in various directions, once more thronged to Paris, my mother, to her great astonishment, one day met Madame Re——c, at Tivoli. The lady was splendidly dressed in an extravagant style of fashion. She was walking between two gentlemen; the one on the right was a *collet noir*, and the one on the left an *oreille de chien*. She was speaking with a

* He here alludes to the indecorous scene which took place between de Lahaye and another deputy, who actually fought until they tore each other's clothes, in the place where sittings of the legislative body were held.

pa-ole pa-fumée, and giving herself all the airs of a perfect *incroyable*. She seemed overjoyed to see my mother, who was rather a formidable person to be encountered by such a woman as Madame Re——c. I recollect that she was put quite out of countenance by the somewhat satirical look of my mother, when she scanned her from head to foot with the cool self-possession of the true Parisian *elegante*.

When Madame de Re——c behaved naturally, she was a lively and agreeable woman. She recovered her courage, and called on us next day. She told us a great deal about the Directorial court, with which she was well acquainted, and about Madame Tallien, who, according to her account, was the prototype of all that was fair and good in the world:—a perfect divinity.

My mother was a woman, and a beautiful woman, whose opinions were not in unison with those which were professed in the *salon* of Madame Tallien, yet she never withheld her admiration from other females, when she felt that it could be justly conferred. My mother had been much struck with the beauty of Madame Tallien, and she knew too many facts relative to her excellent conduct at Bourdeaux, not to be convinced that all the praises conferred on her were well deserved.

The life of Madame Tallien was one of the most extraordinary and diversified I ever knew. She might have become the French Aspasia, and with much greater advantages than were enjoyed by the Aspasia of Athens, with whom her wit, her beauty, and her political influence may serve to establish a comparison. She certainly might have been appreciated much higher than Aspasia in spite of the refined taste of the Athenians, though neither of her husbands was a Pericles. The destiny of Madame Tallien was as singular as herself. She was born in Spain, where her father, M. de Cabarrus, a French banker, settled, and had acquired a great reputation. At twelve years of age Theresa Cabarrus was the loveliest of all the beauties of Cadiz. Her father sent her from home at that early age, because he was still too young to take upon himself the superintendence of so beautiful a daughter. She was seen about this period by her uncle Jalabert, who could not escape the fascination which the lovely Theresa, with a look and a smile, exercised upon every man who beheld her. He wished to marry her; but she gave the preference to M. de Fontenay, to whom she was united some time after. With a cultivated mind and intellectual powers of a high order, Madame Tallien would have possessed, even without her beauty, more than an ordinary share of attractions.

While she was at Bourdeaux, she composed a discourse on some abstract subject, which was intended to be read by way of a sermon:

a custom which was at that time prevalent. She, however, had not courage to read it herself, and she requested M. Jullien to read it for her. She was present on the occasion, and the audience were much more attentive to her than to the heavy and monotonous eloquence of the person who delivered the discourse: she was dressed in a riding-habit of dark blue casimere, with yellow buttons and collar and cuffs of red velvet. Upon her beautiful black hair, which was cut *à la Titus*, and clustered in graceful curls round her face, she wore, a little on one side, a cap of scarlet velvet trimmed with fur; in this costume her beauty was really dazzling. At intervals, the expression of her countenance showed that she was a little out of humour at the manner in which the discourse was read, and on the following Decadi she read it herself in the church of the Franciscans.

Madame Tallien was kind and obliging, but such is the effect on the multitude of a name that bears a stain, that her cause was never separated from that of her husband: the following is a proof of this: Junot was the bearer of the second flags which were sent from the army of Italy to the Directory. He was received with all the pomp which attended the reception of Marmont, who was the bearer of the first colours. Madame Bonaparte, who had not yet set out to join Napoleon, wished to witness the ceremony, and on the day appointed for the reception of Junot, she repaired to the Directory, accompanied by Madame Tallien. They lived at that time in great intimacy, the latter was a fraction of the Directorial royalty, with which Josephine, when Madame Beauharnais, and, indeed, after she became Madame Bonaparte, was in some degree invested. Madame Bonaparte was still a fine woman: her teeth, it is true, were already frightfully decayed; but when her mouth was closed, she looked, especially at a little distance, both young and pretty. As to Madame Tallien, she was then in the full bloom of her beauty. Both were dressed in the antique style, which was then the prevailing fashion, and with as much of richness and ornament as were suitable to morning costume. When the reception was ended, and they were about to leave the Directory, it may be presumed that Junot was not a little proud to offer to escort these two charming women. Junot was then a handsome young man of five-and-twenty, and he had that military look and style for which, indeed, he was always remarkable. A splendid uniform of a Colonel of Hussars, set off his fine figure to the utmost advantage. When the ceremony was ended, he offered one to Madame Bonaparte, who, as his General's wife, was entitled to the first honour, especially on that solemn day; and offering his arm to Madame Tallien, he conducted them down the staircase of the Luxembourg. The crowd

pressed forward to see them as they passed along: "That is the General's wife!" said one. "That is his aide-de-camp," said another. "He is very young.—She is very pretty.—*Vive le Général Bonaparte!*—*Vive la Citoyenne Bonaparte!* She is a good friend to the poor. Ah!" exclaimed a great fat market-woman, "she is *Notre-Dame-des-Victoires!*"—"You are right," said another, "and see who is on the other side of the officer:" "that is *Notre-Dame-de-Septembre!*"—This was severe, and it was also unjust.

Junot escorted Madame Bonaparte when she went to join the General-in-chief in Italy. I am surprised that M. de Bourrienne has omitted mentioning this circumstance in his memoirs. He must have known it, since he was well acquainted with every thing relating to Josephine, and knew many facts of high interest in her life at this period, and subsequently. How happens it too that he makes no mention of Mademoiselle Louise, who might be called her companion instead of her *femme-de-chambre*. At the outset of the journey to Italy, she was such a favourite with Josephine, that she dressed like her mistress, sat at table with her, and was in all respects her friend and confident.

The journey was long, much too long for Junot, though he was very much in love with Mademoiselle Louise. But he was anxious to join the army, for to him, his General was always the dearest of mistresses. Junot has often spoken to me, and *to me alone*, of the vexations he experienced on this journey. He might have added to his circumstantial details relative to Josephine, the conversation he is reported to have had with Bonaparte in Egypt;* but he never breathed a word on the subject; for his character was always noble and generous. The journey to Italy did not produce the effect which usually arises from such incidents in common life: namely, a closer friendship and intimacy between the parties. On the contrary, Madame Bonaparte from that moment evinced some degree of ill-humour towards Junot, and complained with singular warmth of the want of respect which he had shown her, in making love to her *femme-de-chambre* before her face.

At a subsequent period, however, Madame Bonaparte thought no more about Mademoiselle Louise, or the want of respect shown by the aide-de-camp and faithful friend: indeed, I believe she thought but little about Bonaparte himself. I shall by and by notice the subject which then absorbed all her thoughts.

Madame de Re——c often spoke to us about Madame Bonaparte,

* See Bourrienne's Memoirs.

whom she frequently saw at the Directory when she was not exclusively engrossed by the charms of her garden of Armida. On this subject, Madame de Re——c furnished us with some amusing particulars, from which Lucien and the whole family, but especially Madame Leclerc, drew very unfavourable inferences for the future happiness of their brother.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Moreau takes the command of the army of Italy—Championnet—The assassination of Rastadt—Destruction of the regiment of Sheklers—General Joubert The two Suchets—Anecdote of Bonaparte, and the Ordonnateur Chauvet—The two sleeping nymphs—Bonaparte at vingt-et-un.

Moreau took the command of 40,000 men, the sad wreck of our military force in Italy, and marched to meet the enemy. The movements of the Austro-Russian army, commanded by Suwarrow, were, however, better combined than his; the consequence was that Moreau was defeated in the battle of Cassano, losing nearly all his artillery, and 15,000 men killed, wounded, or prisoners.

Championnet once more brought back victory to our standards, by defeating General Mack, and taking Naples: but the Directory determined to sacrifice the glory of one of her sons on the altar of his country, and Championnet was deprived of his command, arrested, tried by a court martial, and was on the point of being shot. All this was because he resisted the designs of certain base and avaricious proconsuls. Championnet's force was consigned to the command of Macdonald, and did not join Moreau's army till after the battle of the Trebia, where we lost 8000 of our troops.

About this time, in the west of France, the Chouans were raising their odious standard, and the roads of La Vendée were drenched anew with the blood of Frenchmen. Our plenipotentiaries were massacred at Rastadt by the Shekler hussars, and, notwithstanding the indignation expressed by all France at that atrocity, vengeance was still very tardy in overtaking the assassins. The two councils were the first to render a melancholy tribute of honour to the victims. Who that saw that ceremony can ever forget its solemnity? Who can recollect without emotion the religious silence which reigned throughout the hall and tribunes, when the vote was put? The pres-

ident then turned towards the curule chair of the victim, on which lay the official costume of the assassinated representative, covered with black crape, bent over it, and pronouncing the names of Robertjot and Bonnier, added in a voice the tone of which was always thrilling—

ASSASSINATED AT THE CONGRESS OF RASTADT.

Immediately all the representatives responded—

"May their blood be upon the heads of their murderers!"

This crime was long attributed to the court of Austria, but I have positive evidence that the Queen of Naples and the Colonel of the Shekler regiment were the sole authors of the murder. I do not now recollect at what battle it was that the Shekler hussars were in such a situation as obliged them to capitulate. Their conscience told them, however, that they ought not to expect quarter. Will you make us prisoners?" demanded the commander of the corps. He received for answer an exclamation of rage and indignation: "Defend yourselves, wretches!" The whole of the regiment was exterminated.

A new misfortune which befell France about this period was the death of Joubert, who was killed at the battle of Novi, at the time when, touched by the miseries of his country, he forgot her offences, and felt nothing but her danger. Joubert was the friend of Championnet. On the latter being arrested, he sent his resignation to the Directory, and it was long ere he would again enter the service. When he did, he was first appointed to the command of the seventeenth military division, the head-quarters of which were then in Paris, and a few weeks after to the command of the army of Italy. The striking similarity of situation between Joubert and Bonaparte is most remarkable. Both were of equal age, and both, in their early career, suffered a sort of disgrace; they were finally appointed to command first the seventeenth military divisions, and afterwards the army of Italy. There is in all this a curious parity of events: but death soon ended the career of one of the young heroes. That which ought to have constituted the happiness of his life was the cause of Joubert's death; namely, his marriage. But how could he refrain from loving the woman he espoused? Ah! who can have forgotten Zephirine de Montholon, her enchanting grace, her playful wit, her good-humour, and her beauty! What delicacy and spirit on her features! I think Joubert was very pardonable.

The mention of Joubert brings to my recollection a story about Bonaparte and the two Suchets (the Marshal and his brother) who were the intimate friends of Joubert. The circumstance I am about to relate, happened a little after the siege of Toulon. The town had

been in the possession of the French for some weeks, and although his military and official duties might naturally have been expected to fill up his time completely, there were still some hours of the day which hung heavy on Bonaparte's hands. Chauvet, the commissary-in-chief, had some little affair of his own which screened him from the attack of ennui, but Bonaparte was entirely free. The director of the maritime work (or some such officer) had two very handsome daughters, on one of whom Chauvet bestowed all his attention. Junot likewise had contrived to fill up his time in a similar way, but Bonaparte, as I have said, was, in the midst of his occupations, the prey of ennui. One day he said to Chauvet, "I must go and dine with Suchet, tell him I am coming."

But for the better explanation of what follows, it is necessary to premise that Suchet, then *chef de bataillon*, was in quarters at La Seille, a pretty little village, situate on the very lowest point of the Bay of Toulon. Suchet occupied a small house, the property of the father of the two fair maidens above mentioned, with one of whom Chauvet was in love. The father and daughters were accordingly invited to dine with the party of young men, the eldest of whom had not reached his twenty-fifth year.

Suchet received his guest in his usual way, his face beaming with pleasure and good-humour, and seeming to say, "Welcome, welcome to my house!" His brother Gabriel acted the part of housekeeper, and provided an excellent dinner. Gabriel was also an amiable and good-tempered man, and did all he could that day to make eight or ten young madcaps happy. But as pleasure must have a term, it was necessary to think of retiring home. This, however, was found to be impracticable, for whilst the company were enjoying themselves, there had been a great fall of snow, succeeded by a hard frost, which rendered the communication with the village impossible; it was, besides, very foggy. However, with punch, conversation, and laughter, they amused themselves for a few hours longer: but they had to wait for the dawn of day. There was but one bed in all the house—that in which the two brothers slept. What was to be done? It was then proposed that the two ladies should occupy it; but as the bedchamber was the only room in the house in which a fire could be lighted, they would not hear of it.

Bonaparte, who then abhorred what he called dull faces, proposed a game at vingt-et-un. It was usually the most laughable thing in the world to see him play at any game whatever: he, whose quick perception and prompt judgment immediately seized on and mastered every thing which came in his way, was, curiously enough, never able

to understand the manœuvres of any game, however simple. Thus, his only resource was to cheat. Well, for some time, vingt-et-un kept the company alive. But the cold soon overpowered the girls; slumber stole upon them, in spite of their efforts to banish it, and of the glances of Chauvet. At length they could hold out no longer, but threw themselves on the bed, which stood in a corner of the room, and fell forthwith into a sound sleep. Cold, as well as fire, acts as a soporific; and it was not long before all the company, except Bonaparte and Gabriel Suchet, were snoring. Some stretched themselves on wooden benches, which stood round the chamber, and some on chairs, while Bonaparte and Gabriel spent the whole night, a winter's night, that is to say, seven hours at least, in playing at vingt-et-un. Bonaparte's eyelids never once drooped. Occasionally he would turn his eyes towards the bed, and look at the young girls; and when sometimes Gabriel Suchet pointed out the elegant position in which one of them lay, he would smile, but with an air of apathy, rather singular in a young man of twenty-five. The fact is, Bonaparte had but one real passion, and in that all his other feelings were absorbed.

I have heard Gabriel Suchet say, that notwithstanding the many years which have intervened since the occurrence of this incident, he often thinks he still sees Bonaparte sitting in the arm-chair, one of his hands supporting his head, and the other stretched forward, as he pronounced the continually repeated words, *Carte-Content*. Marshal Suchet fills too important a place in our military and political history, to be passed over in silence. His portrait shall be given in its proper place. Here I have merely introduced him as the worthy friend of Joubert.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Description of Madame Lætitia—Character of Madame Bacciochi—Intelligence of Bonaparte's return from Egypt—Josephine sets off to meet him—Bonaparte refuses to see her—A reconciliation brought about by Hortense and Eugene—Sentiments of the Bonaparte Family towards Josephine.

Bonaparte's mother has usually been represented as an old Corsican lady, who had doubtless been handsome, but who, about the age of forty-seven or forty-eight years, became merely a foolish old woman. This, at least, is the portrait drawn of her by certain igno-

rant biographers, who did not know her, and who, like a great many in the world, love to have a subject to criticise, and to laugh at the expense of all whom fortune and talent have placed above them.

I have already observed, that Madame Lætitia Bonaparte was one of the handsomest women in Corsica, though her fine face was wrinkled by vexation of mind. The first time I saw her she was dressed in a very absurd way; yet she nevertheless made a strong impression upon me. Her soul beamed in her looks, and it was a soul full of the loftiest sentiments. If we take the word talent in the signification in which it is usually applied, it must be admitted that Madame Bonaparte had little. At the period of which I speak, that is to say, the year 1799, she began to act a part, which, though unnoticed by the world, had no little influence upon many of the events in which her family were engaged. At this period I knew her, and shall describe her as she then appeared, for she altered very much afterwards.

Madame Bonaparte was of a lofty and elevated character. A widow at an early age, in a country where the head of a family is every thing, the young mother found it necessary to call up all the energy of her character. She was gifted with that delicacy of perception which distinguishes the Corsicans, but in her this quality did not degenerate into hypocrisy, as in some of her children. Indeed, she was habitually candid. She evinced firmness in certain circumstances, but in others, an extravagant obstinacy. This was obvious in a number of the systematic triflings which composed a great part of her life.

She was very ignorant, not only of our literature, but of that of her own country. She had however some knowledge of the usual forms of society, of which she had seen a little in the course of her acquaintance with M. de Marbeuf and other distinguished men, who visited much at her house, at the time of the occupation of Corsica. But this slight knowledge of the world was to her rather a source of inconvenience than of advantage, inasmuch as it put her in constant dread of committing some blunder. Her haughtiness, which was not offensive, became dignity when elevated to her new situation. She was kind at heart, but of a cold exterior, possessed of much good sense, but as I have said, of little shrewdness or knowledge of the world; and, at the period of which I speak, she was very scrupulous in exacting from every body what she considered her due.

She was a very good mother, and her children, with one exception, were good to her in their turn. They treated her with every respect, and showed her assiduous attention. Lucien and Joseph were parti-

cularly attached to her. As for Napoleon, he was not so respectful and attentive to his mother as his brothers were; and we shall presently see the true cause of his remissness. Madame Bacciochi evinced no particular regard for her mother. But for whom did she ever show regard? I always thought her the most disagreeable woman I had ever met with; and it is quite astonishing to me how M. de Fontanes, a man of such superior mind, such elegant manners, the very essence of sociability, should have admired Madame Bacciochi in the way he did.

On the evening of the 9th of October, my mother had a few friends with her. Madame de Caseaux, her daughter, Madame de Mondenard, my mother, and several gentlemen of our acquaintance were seated at a large round table playing at *loto-dauphin*, a game of which my mother was very fond. Suddenly a cabriolet drove up to the door; a young gentleman jumped out of it, and in a minute was at the top of the staircase. It was my brother Albert.

"Guess what news I bring you!" said he. As we were all in high spirits, and his countenance bespoke him to be so too, all sorts of absurd guesses were made, at which Albert constantly shook his head. "Nonsense!" said my mother, taking up the bag containing the little balls. "If there were a change in the government of the republic, you could not make it an affair of greater importance."—"Well, mother," replied Albert seriously, "what you say now in jest, may possibly be realized. Bonaparte is in France."

When my brother uttered these last words, the whole party seemed struck motionless, as if by a magic wand. My mother, who had just drawn a ball out of the bag, held her little hand raised in the air, and the bag having fallen down, the balls were rolling about the carpet in every direction, without exciting the notice of anybody. Every one sat as if petrified. Albert was the only person who was conscious of the drollery of our position, and a burst of laughter, which he could not repress, brought us to ourselves. "Bonaparte in France!" exclaimed my mother, "it cannot be possible. I saw his mother this very day at five o'clock, and she had no idea of his return."—"It is nevertheless true," said Albert. "I was with Brunetière just now, when a messenger was sent by Gohier to fetch him. He desired me to wait till he came back from the Luxembourg; and he returned in about half an hour. He informed me that Bonaparte arrived two days ago at Fréjus. He added, that he found Madame Josephine Bonaparte at Gohier's where she had been dining, and where she received the first announcement of this important intelligence. "And," added Albert, speaking in a half-whisper to my mother, "I understand she was not so well pleased as might have been expected."

No language can convey any idea of the state of excitement occasioned throughout France, by Bonaparte's arrival. From the 9th of October, all around us was in continual agitation. On the 10th, Josephine set off to meet her husband; but without knowing exactly what road he would take. She thought it likely he would come by the way of Burgundy, and therefore Louis and she set off for Lyons.

Madame Bonaparte was a prey to great and well-founded uneasiness. Whether she was guilty or only imprudent, she was strongly accused by the Bonaparte family, who were desirous that Napoleon should obtain a divorce. The elder M. de Caulaincourt stated to us his apprehensions on this point; but whenever the subject was introduced, my mother changed the conversation, because, knowing as she did the sentiments of the Bonaparte family, she could not reply without either committing them, or having recourse to falsehood. She knew, moreover, the truth of many circumstances which M. de Caulaincourt seemed to doubt, and which her situation with respect to Bonaparte prevented her from communicating to him. Madame Bonaparte committed a great fault in neglecting at this juncture to conciliate her mother-in-law, who might have protected her against those who sought her ruin; and effected it nine years later; for the divorce in 1809 was brought about by the joint efforts of all the members of the Bonaparte family, aided by some of Napoleon's most confidential servants, whom Josephine, either as Madame Bonaparte or as Empress, had done nothing to make her friends.

Bonaparte, on his arrival in Paris, found his house deserted; but his mother, sisters, and sister-in-law, and, in short, every member of his family, except Louis, who had attended Madame Bonaparte to Lyons, came to him immediately. The impression made upon him by the solitude of his home and its desertion by its mistress, was profound and terrible, and nine years afterwards, when the ties between him and Josephine were severed for ever, he showed that it was not effaced. From not finding her with his family, he inferred that she felt herself unworthy of their presence, and feared to meet the man she had wronged. He considered her journey to Lyons as a mere pretence. M. de Bourrienne says, that, for some days after Josephine's return, Bonaparte treated her with *extreme coldness*. As he was an eyewitness, why does he not state the whole truth, and say that on her return, Bonaparte *refused to see her, and did not see her!* It was to the earnest entreaties of her children that she owed the recovery, not of her husband's love, for that had long ceased, but of that tenderness, acquired by habit, and that intimate intercourse which made her still retain the rank of consort to the greatest man of his

age. Bonaparte was, at this period, much attached to Eugène Beauharnais, who, to do him justice, was a charming youth. He knew less of Hortense; but her youth and sweetness of temper, and the protection of which, as his adopted daughter, she besought him not to deprive her, proved powerful advocates, and overcame his resistance. In this delicate negotiation, it was good policy not to bring any other person into play, whatever might be their influence with Bonaparte, and Madame Bonaparte did not, therefore, have recourse either to Barras, Bourrienne, or Berthier. It was expedient that they who interceded for her should be able to say something without the possibility of a reply. Now, Bonaparte could not with any degree of propriety explain to such children, as Eugène or Hortense, the particulars of their mother's conduct. He was therefore constrained to silence, and had no argument to combat the tears of two innocent creatures at his feet, exclaiming, "Do not abandon our mother; she will break her heart! And ought injustice to take from us poor orphans, the support of one whom Providence has sent to replace him of whose natural protection the scaffold has already deprived us!"

The scene, as Bonaparte has since stated, was long and painful, and the two children, at length, introduced their mother, and placed her in his arms. The unhappy woman had awaited his decision at the door of a small back staircase, extended at almost full length upon the stairs, suffering the acutest pangs of mental torture.

Whatever might be his wife's errors, Bonaparte appeared entirely to forget them, and the reconciliation was complete. Of all the members of the family, Madame Leclerc was most vexed at the pardon which Napoleon had granted to his wife. Bonaparte's mother was also very ill pleased; but she said nothing. Madame Joseph Bonaparte, who was always very amiable, took no part in these family quarrels; therefore, she could easily determine what part to take when fortune smiled on Josephine. As to Madame Bacciochi, she gave free vent to her ill-humour and disdain: the consequence was, that her sister-in-law could never endure her. Christine, who was a beautiful creature, followed the example of Madame Joseph, and Caroline was so young, that her opinion could have no weight in such an affair. As to Bonaparte's brothers, they were at open war with Josephine.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The 8th of November—My brother-in-law visits Bonaparte—My mother and I visit Madame Lætitia Bonaparte—The Bonaparte Family during the 8th—Their danger—Moreau appointed jailer of the directors—Moreau's character drawn by Bonaparte—M. Brunetière and Gohier—Moreau's harshness towards Gohier—Moulins—Madame Leclerc's correspondence with Moreau—Complicated intrigue—Bonaparte and Moreau—Astonishing scene at Feydeau—Fouché's measures—Singular ignorance of the Bonaparte family with regard to the events of the 8th of November—Madame Lætitia relates Napoleon's birth—M. de Sémonville—A curious conversation respecting Bonaparte between M. Brunetière and Gohier. The bunch of keys and Moreau's sword.

The events of the 8th of November have been detailed by so many eyewitnesses, and even by the very actors in that great political drama, that I shall confine myself to a recital of facts, isolated to be sure, but connected with it, which are known but to few, and some of them to myself alone. For some days previous to the 8th, Paris was violently agitated. All were apprehensive of some event, and yet no one knew of what he was afraid. Alas, we were soon to know the cause of our disquiet!

On the morning of the 8th Lucien quitted the house in which he resided in the little Rue Verte and established his head-quarters at M. Mercier's, the president of the Council of Ancients, who then occupied a house beside the Hotel de Breteuil, near the Manège, and who was entirely devoted to him. It was then half-past seven o'clock, and as the decree of removal had not yet appeared, Bonaparte sent almost every instant to know if the affair was proceeding. My brother-in-law went to him repeatedly to exhort him to patience. On the first visit, the General's servant mistook his name, though he knew both him and my brother well, and announced him as the citizen Permon. The General started at the name, for in truth, he did not expect my brother. M. de Geouffre, however, received a welcome reception, and was presently sent back again to hasten the publication of the decree. My brother-in-law remarked that Bonaparte had a pair of pistols within his reach. Up to that moment he had been quite alone. Soon after my brother-in-law's first visit, the Rue Chantereine began to be thronged so thickly with horses and people that scarcely any one

could pass along it. At length, at half-past eight or a little later, the news that the decree was ready, was carried to Bonaparte by my brother-in-law, and the General immediately mounted his horse to proceed to the Tuileries. On alighting there my brother-in-law met General Debelle, with whom he was intimately acquainted. The General was dressed in plain clothes, for he had run out on the first intelligence of the movement. "How comes it," said M. de Geouffre, "that you are not in uniform?"—"Why," replied the General, "I hardly knew what was going on; but the thing is soon rectified, and going up to a gunner who was standing by, "Let me have your coat, my brave fellow," said he, at the same time taking off his own. The gunner gave him his coat, and in this costume he attended General Bonaparte to the Council-chamber.

The revolution of the 8th was completed, and Paris was no longer agitated. We went to see Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, who lived with Joseph. She appeared calm though far from being easy, for her extreme paleness and the convulsive movements she evinced whenever an unexpected noise met her ear, gave her features a ghastly air. In these moments she appeared to me truly like the mother of the Gracchi. And her situation added force to the idea; she had perhaps more at stake than that famous Roman matron! She had three sons under the stroke of fate, one of whom would probably receive the blow even if the others escaped. This she strongly felt.

My mother and myself remained with her a part of that tantalizing day, and only quitted her on the restoration of her confidence, by Lucien's different messages, who frequently sent Mariani his valet-de-chambre to calm her disquiet as well as that of his wife. Leaving, then, these ladies in comparative ease, we proceeded to Madame Leclerc, who was but little frightened, because indeed she never reflected upon any thing, but who nevertheless raised the loudest clamour of any. Every quarter of an hour she wrote to Moreau. She kept at that period a femme-de-chambre, a sort of *serva padrona*, who wrote to her dictation, and fine writing it was! When I arrived with my mother, she wished me to take the pen and write in her name to General Moreau. It was to ask the news for which she was crying out continually, and two hours later she was informed that Moreau was not at home, and that he probably would not return that night. On our departure she made us promise to revisit her early on the morrow. My mother willingly engaged to do so, because she loved Madame Leclerc dearly: for my part, I was at that time tenderly attached to Caroline, the youngest of Bonaparte's sisters, who was about my own age.

We had scarcely left her, when we met my brother-in-law coming to tell us the news. He quitted us to rejoin Lucien, whom he wished not to leave during those perilous hours, for even now tranquillity was but apparent, and might be delusive to the Bonaparte family. The danger to which that family was exposed, might have been even imminent in the night of the 8th to 9th. If the Directory had not been strictly guarded by the troops under Moreau, who had accepted the charge of jailer-in-chief to the captive directors; if Moreau had not kept them under even closer restraint than he was ordered to do; if he had not acted an ungracious part; in a word, if he had behaved as he ought to have done, then the Directory and the councils would have been the victors, instead of the vanquished, on the 9th of November. The event would, doubtless, have been unfortunate, but then their cause was that of the constitution; and if they had triumphed, all Bonaparte's brothers would have followed him to the scaffold; and their friends and partisans would all have had a distant view of la Guyane, to say the least.

I do not recollect the exact period of Moreau's marriage; but I believe it took place a little after the epoch of the 8th of November. Bonaparte wished him to espouse his sister. Perhaps it was fortunate for both, for all three, that this union did not take place. Indeed, it is difficult to say, whether Moreau would have been more trustworthy as a brother-in-law, than he was as a brother in arms. Bonaparte had acquired an ascendancy over him. The day after he met him with Gohier, he went and presented him with a scimitar of surprising beauty, and enriched with precious stones—the gift of Mourad-Bey. Thus at the epoch of the 8th of November, Moreau was entirely the slave of that charm which Bonaparte knew so well how to cast over those he wished to conquer. But let us return to the memorable day. The conduct of Moreau on that occasion was, a long time, a mystery to me. I could not, at first, incline to my brother's opinion, who constantly maintained that it was Moreau's extreme weakness of disposition which had thus placed him at Bonaparte's disposal; but I afterwards was confirmed in that opinion, by what I heard fall from Bonaparte's own mouth. I was one day at Malmaison, in Josephine's bedchamber; Bonaparte came in for a moment, she handed him a small note, I believe it was from Madame Hulot, Moreau's mother-in-law, for he was then married. Bonaparte read the note, and shrugging his shoulders said, "Always the same! Ever at the mercy of those who choose to lead him! now he is the slave of a wicked old woman. It is fortunate that his pipe cannot speak, or she would lead that too!"

Josephine wished to make some reply: "Come," said he, "you must not defend him. You do not understand this matter." Here he embraced her. "If indeed it had been his lot to be led by such a gentle wife as you! But, his dragoon of a mother-in-law, and his shrew of a wife, are very she-devils. I will not have any such about me." Why he made use of this last phrase, I know no more than others: I made no inquiry, because I naturally thought that it referred to something in the note. The above, however, are the words he used, and they made the greater impression on me, because I myself was but just married.

It is well known that Moreau was the appointed and recognised commander of the troops who guarded the imprisoned directors. The most rigid surveillance was established over them. The following very curious details, connected with this subject, were furnished to us the day after by Brunetière, who certainly did not take them from the *Moniteur*.

M. Brunetière was the intimate friend of Gohier, and as soon as he learned what had happened he proceeded to Luxembourg, where Gohier lived on a second floor, in the Rue du Théâtre Français. When he reached the first sentinels, he fancied himself upon a field of battle. His natural assurance, and he had his share, rendered him deaf to the repeated exclamations of "You cannot pass." Uneasy on account of his friend, he wished to see Moreau; he found that impossible; he retraced his steps to the Luxembourg; his agitation, his eagerness to visit his unfortunate friend, who might need his assistance, gave rise to suspicions. Moreau had given directions that all persons who presented themselves without a written order, signed by him, and who insisted on seeing any of the Directors, should be conducted before the commanding officer: and further, that all who were admitted either to Moulins or Gohier, should be required, on their departure, to swear that they were the bearers neither of a written or verbal message. Happily, Brunetière, seeing the turn things had taken, judged that he was most likely to serve his friend at a distance than he would be near his person, and made the best of his way from the Petit Luxembourg.

Gohier's conduct on the 8th and 9th, was perfectly in keeping with his character. He refused to see Moreau when he came to him on the 8th of November. Moulins, too, had already treated Moreau with so marked a disdain, that those who were witnesses of his reception actually felt for him. The director-general regarded him for some moments with the most thrilling contempt, surveying him from head

to foot, and pointing to an antechamber—"Remain there," said he, and left him.*

But the 9th was to develop the entire plan of the conspiracy (for we must make use of that expression) which was only announced by the events of the 8th. A fact sufficiently singular is the entire ignorance in which all that portion of the Bonaparte family, who had no share in the action, were placed. Every thing had been managed so quietly in Paris, Fouché had so well taken his measures to prevent the escape of any intelligence, that Bonaparte's mother and sister were obliged to obtain information of what was passing in the manner I have described.

The events of the evening had proceeded so quietly, that the uneasiness of Madame Lætitia Bonaparte was entirely dissipated. It was thought the councils, after having sanctioned the sending back of three Directors, and voted a dispensation with regard to his age, would proceed to the nomination of Bonaparte, and that every thing would thus be settled. Albert thought that M. de Talleyrand would be one of the peace-making directors, and of this I was very glad, because his niece was a friend of mine.

My mother expressed her astonishment that Madame Lætitia had not been to see her daughter-in-law on such an emergency. "Signora Panoria," replied Madame Bonaparte, "it is not to that quarter that I look for comfort! It is with Julie, with Christine. There, indeed, I find maternal happiness; but for the other—no, no." As she finished the sentence, she compressed her lips and opened her eyes widely. This was a characteristic indication with her when what she had just spoken strongly interested her.

That very day I had occasion to remark the maternal tenderness of Madame Lætitia. We had no company to dinner, and she conversed for hours with my mother with greater freedom than she had yet done, since her arrival from Corsica. They both began to recall the days of youth. Madame Bonaparte was quite at her ease, because with us she spoke nothing but Italian; indeed, to say the truth, her French was not very intelligible. I recollect she this day told us, that being at mass on the day of the fête of Notre Dame of August, she was overtaken with the pains of childbirth, and she had hardly reached home, when she was delivered of *Napoleon* on a wretched rug. During her pregnancy she had experienced many misfortunes. For when the French entered Corsica, many of the principal families,

* Moreau afterwards said he did not leave him, this is not the fact. Moreau was not received by the director-general.

and among them that of Bonaparte, were constrained to fly. They assembled at the foot of Monte-Rotondo, the highest mountain in Corsica. In their flight, and during their sojourn among the mountains, they underwent many hardships. "I know not why," said she, "it has been reported that Paoli was Napoleon's godfather. It is not true; Laurent Jiubéga* was his godfather. He held him over the baptismal font along with another of our relations, Celtruda Bonaparte."†

Whilst this conversation was going on Madame Leclerc was seated on her favourite divan, admiring herself in a glass which was opposite to her, and having at length arranged the folds of her cashmere shawl, she reminded her mother of all the sufferings they had endured during their flight from Ajaccio. Madame Mère had often talked over those events, but the recital never interested me so powerfully as on the 8th of November, when the space of six years had rendered so different the situation of those very children whom she, a lone feeble woman, had been forced to hurry away beyond the reach of the proscription, carrying the youngest in her arms when overcome by fatigue they could no longer walk! and ultimately embarking with them in a frail vessel, landing on a shore which increased their dangers. In recording this period of her life, the looks of Madame Bonaparte were as handsome as her language was eloquent.

At this point then, when a new era seemed about to open upon all his family, I will sum up the position of its different members during the revolutionary years. At the period when Paoli intended to deliver up Corsica to the English, it was well known that many of the most considerable families in the island were bent upon defeating his projects and seizing Ajaccio, St. Florent, and Calvi, the capital of Catalogne. The Bonaparte family were at the head of the Ajaccian movement, the Jiubégas were the prime instigators of that of Calvi, and the family of Gentily of that of Saint-Florent. Calvi and Saint-Florent rose in arms, but the influence of Paoli, which was immense, and the lack of means on the part of the insurgents, paralysed the execution of the plans of the Ajaccian patriots, and their leaders, after the abortive attempt, were compelled to seek safety in flight. The Bonaparte family, more the objects of hatred than any other, then quitted Ajaccio. Napoleon, who was one of the actors in this drama, concealed himself in the mountains in company with Moltedo,‡ both

* His nephew was afterwards prefect in Corsica. He was a relation of Napoleon.

† Daughter of Charles Bonaparte, the Emperor's uncle, and wife of Paravicini, a cousin also of Napoleon.

‡ It is somewhat singular that Bonaparte, during his exile at St. Helena, does not mention one word of this remarkable period of his life.

being disguised as sailors. He was arrested by Paoli's partizans, who descended from the heights to the number of four or five thousand:* he however contrived to escape, and traversing the Marzzolino (a small intermediate district) reached Calvi. From thence, being informed that his younger brothers and sister had not yet arrived, he re-embarked for Ajaccio. Hearing, however, on his way thither that his mother had been fortunate enough to escape, he returned to Calvi, where he found his family established with the Jiubégas and the Paraviccinis, their friends and relations. Madame Bonaparte had then with her Joseph,† Eliza, (Marianne) Jerome, Louis, Paulette, Caroline, (Annonciata) Napoleon, and Fesch. From Calvi Madame Bonaparte proceeded to Marseilles, where she resided, until her return to Corsica, which did not take place till her son was appointed General-in-chief of the army of Italy. Jerome was then living with General Casabianca, the commandant of Calvi, and Caroline was intrusted to the care of Paraviccini. Lucien had quitted his family one month when the Revolution broke out. M. de Sémonville, on quitting Corsica on his return to France, told the Committee of Public Safety who had a great fancy for his own head, that not wishing to part with it he had brought Lucien with him. He had surveyed this youth with the eye of a clever man, who knew how to discern shrewdness and talent, because he himself was conspicuous for those qualities. He perceived that Lucien possessed an ardent soul, whose suppressed fire would have overwhelmed and destroyed him, had he not taken him by the hand. Vexed at being destined for the ecclesiastical state‡ for which he had not a single requisite, Lucien sought the friendship of M. de Sémonville, who was resolved to make him his private secretary, on his appointment as ambassador to Constantinople. This was a praiseworthy action on the part of M. de Sémonville; but not at all surprising, for men of talent, whatever may be said of them, are generally good men. Lucien resided at Marseilles with Madame de Sémonville and her children, among whom was the fair Zephirine, who afterwards became Madame Joubert, and the Messieurs de Montholon, whose names are connected with misfor-

* It was at this moment that the government sent three commissioners to arrest Paoli; these were Salicetti, Delcher, and Lacombe.

† The following is the order of their birth: Joseph, Napoleon, Eliza, Lucien, Paulette, Louis, Caroline, and Jerome.

‡ Lucien was destined for the ecclesiastical state at the request of Abbé Bonaparte, one of his relations, who promised to resign in his favour a Canonicat of the noble order of St. Stephen, at Florence. This abbé was still living at the time of the conquest of Italy. He resided at San Miniato.

tunes the most illustrious. Lucien thus escaped the captivity to which M. de Sémonville fell a victim.*

On the evening of the 9th we went to the theatre Feydeau, which at that period was the most pleasant in Paris. Martin, Madame Saint-Aubin, Mademoiselle Philis, Juliet and Chenard, performed there. I forget what was the first piece represented that evening, but *l'Auteur dans son ménage* was the afterpiece. The curtain rose, and the latter piece was proceeding very quietly, when all of a sudden the actors stopped and the *Auteur dans son ménage* himself appeared, and advancing in front of the stage, dressed in a morning-gown of white dimity, exclaimed in a very loud voice, "Citizens! General Bonaparte has been nearly assassinated at Saint-Cloud by traitors to their country." On hearing these words, Madame Leclerc uttered so piercing a shriek that immediately the attention of all the company was attracted to our box, spite of the agitation which the news had universally excited. Madame Leclerc still continued crying, and her mother, who doubtless was as much affected as she could be at the intelligence, endeavoured to quiet her; though she herself could scarcely hold the glass of water the box-keeper had handed to us, so great was her agitation.

On Madame Leclerc's recovery, we all proceeded to the residence of Lucien, conceiving that there we should hear some certain intelligence. My brother-in-law met us on the stairs, and from him we learned the full particulars of the event of which I have related a part, and to which I shall return in the succeeding volume. We then returned home, where we found M. Brunetière: this excellent man was quite downcast. He was much attached to Gohier, and that gentleman's misfortune afflicted him deeply.

A few days after the 8th of November, speaking of the events which had preceded and followed that day, Gohier alluded to Bonaparte with extreme bitterness; he even was so ridiculously blinded by passion, as to refuse to allow him transcendent talent. "Oh, as to that," observed M. Brunetière, who was present, "it is too bad."—"Not at all," rejoined Gohier, "the fault of one is often the cause of another's success; and if, when General Bonaparte came to Paris after Fructidor, Moulins, Barras, and Ducos had been willing to second me, this pretty gentleman would have been in their and my situation. Is there any improbability in such a supposition?"—"But still,"

* M. de Sémonville, as he was proceeding on his embassy, was arrested on his way to Novate, in the Grisons, upon the Lake de Guarda. It was the colonel who served him as an escort who betrayed him into the hands of the Austrians (July 1793).

replied Brunetière, "it seems to me that that would not have been so easy a matter. What pretext would you have advanced?"—"What pretext? we might have advanced twenty, the very least of which would have brought him to a court-martial. First of all, the 18th of Fructidor, instigated by him—executed by his orders."—"But it appears to me," said M. Brunetière, "that that event was the saving of the republic."—"Yes, a pretty saving, truly! consummated by mutilating every portion of its administration, by striking at the very heart of the Directory, by strengthening our political clubs! He was the chief conspirator in that affair."

In speaking thus, Gohier either forgot, or pretended to forget, that Carnot had been sacrificed to an intrigue to which General Bonaparte was a stranger! at least, I believe I have a perfect assurance of that fact; and as to the Manège and the club of the Rue du Bac, these are at least questionable points. M. Brunetière, whose judgment and discrimination were correct enough when he was not in anger, which, however, was the case ten times out of twelve when he was engaged in a dispute, observed to Gohier that it would have been impossible to cite any man before a court-martial on such trifling charges, especially one so loaded with laurels as was Bonaparte on his return from Egypt. "Hear reason, my dear Gohier," continued he, "we are both *avocats*, and can pretty well say what can and what cannot form the basis of an accusation." Gohier shrugged his shoulders, and exclaimed: "But the contributions which he levied in Italy! Was he not the exactor?"—"My dear fellow," replied Brunetière, "you are surely joking! Have you brought Massena, or Brune, or twenty others, who have been far more guilty in that respect than Bonaparte; have you brought any of these to a court-martial? Nor, indeed, has Bonaparte enriched himself more than they. The Cisalpine republic made him, General Bonaparte, a present of some splendid diamonds, which he could accept without any compunction. Come! come! disbursement is not so easy a matter."—"Well!" rejoined Gohier, "all I say is, that his resignation should have been accepted when it was offered. Rewbel was the only man who had the heart to say, as he presented him with the pen, 'You desire, General, to retire from service? The republic will, undoubtedly, lose in you a brave and able chief; but she still has children who will not forsake her.'" The result of this bombast was, that Bonaparte did not take the pen, that he withdrew the tender of his resignation, and that he departed for Egypt, carrying with him the flower of our troops, of our literature, and all our navy. "We should have smote him," continued the ex-president of the Directory, still fretful from his misfortune; "we

should have smote him, and that without pity; the Republic would then still have been in existence. Such was my advice; but Sieyes, who was his accomplice, had influence enough in our council to get Bernadotte's resignation accepted, although in fact he had not tendered it, in order to have him sent out of the way, while he uttered not one word of accepting the resignation of a factious wretch who braved the first power in the Republic, by insolently offering his own. I repeat it," added he, with energy, "that if my advice had been taken, every thing would have been easily settled."

The above conversation, which I have detailed with the utmost exactness, affords some idea of the danger of which Bonaparte was apprised, when he insisted on his departure for Egypt. Not only had the East always been the favourite object of his wishes, but, at the very moment when glory had almost immortalized him in his astonishing successes in Italy, he could not bear the thought of remaining in Europe, where every echo told his splendid achievements. Besides, to a vivid desire of raising the ancient war-cry of the crusaders, there was joined a positive intention to escape positive danger. I shall by and by relate some facts which preceded and followed his departure from Paris, by which the truth of my assertions may be judged; facts with which I became acquainted after my marriage, through the medium of Junot and his friends.

Some time after the conversation I have detailed above, Gohier met Moreau and M. Garet. The General was embarrassed at the rencontre, and was endeavouring to make a justification of his conduct. "General," said Gohier, addressing him with dignity, "I am by my profession enabled to read people's consciences; do not force me to say that I read in yours nothing which can excuse you."

Moreau began to raise his voice, as if he were hurt by the severe expressions of Gohier. "General," he again said, "I have no wish to seek you, nor certainly any to interrogate you. I do not wish to continue a conversation which must be as painful to you as it is disagreeable to me. I shall only add," said he, laying his hand gently on the pummel of Moreau's sword, "that a bunch of keys would well become this place." Moreau turned as pale as ashes. The blow was struck: he stammered out some words which Gohier, as he left him, affected not to hear. It is pretended that Moreau deplored his error, and thought to make amends by exclaiming, "I shall find a way to repair it!" If he thought to do so by pointing the Russian cannons against the French columns, he has at least proved, that he never fairly knew what he was about.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Epochs in the Life of the Emperor—Revolution of the 8th November—Errors corrected—Bonaparte falsely accused of fear—Incredible sagacity of General Bonaparte—Colonel Dumoulin and General Brune—Lucien in danger, and his deliverance—Hopes created by the Chief of the Consular Government—Bonaparte's friendship for Madame Lucien—Residences of the Members of the Bonaparte family—Lucien Minister of the Interior—Visit to Lucien at le Plessis Chamant—The poet d'Offreville—Lucien's cousin Ramolino—Assassination of the family of du Petitval at Vitry—Scene at Malmaison, and long conversation of the First Consul.

The life of Napoleon may be divided into several periods. The first, like all that is young, was great, powerful, and brilliant. It was then and in Italy that his name rose above the reach of detraction, to shine with a splendour which threw into shade the later glories of the Emperor. Egypt saw the commencement of the second epoch of his life full of wonders. The 8th of November was the third. And two only form the remainder of an existence so rapid and so full. Thus to mark the passage of Napoleon upon earth, five trophies may be said, as landmarks, to divide his route. The first formed of a pile of conquered banners, mural crowns, treaties, keys of towns, and more laurels than ever before victory had granted to her most favoured heroes. The second composed of pyramids, sphinxes, and hieroglyphic monuments, indicating that his youthful glory had been to awaken the echoes of the ancient African shores. The Consular fasces marked the third; this emblem, still surmounted by the republican cock, admitted no suspicion that the next column would be formed of sceptres, thrones, and crowns, bearing an escutcheon of imperial blazonry. And what is that which follows? It is a tomb! a tomb which has ingulfed all! which has devoured laurels, thrones, sceptres, and crowns! and which, fixed by indifference and hatred in a desert, is visited only by that vassal of England, the ocean, whose incessantly returning waves would fain conceal even the slab that covers his remains.

But a truce to these reflections; when indulged, they deprive the mind of the free exercise of its powers. I return to earlier and less painful recollections.

The revolution of the 8th of November is undoubtedly the most important of the nine which we had experienced in the course of seven years;* it not only changed the destiny of France, but exercised a powerful influence upon that of Europe and the world. Nevertheless, none of the events which had preceded it had passed with so much apparent calm. France was so tired of the Directory, that any thing which should replace it would have been well received, and was happy in obeying an authority that offered some guarantee; the past answered for the future, which General Bonaparte announced. He only was seen in this consular triumvirate; Sieyes and Roger-Ducos stood unobserved in the shade; and the young General served as the only point of view to eyes fatigued with weeping, which had so long sought, without being aware of it, a lighthouse that should guide them into port. Thirty days only had elapsed since Bonaparte had landed at Frejus, and already he had overthrown the shameful government by which France was weighed down! and had given it a new one, of which the wheels commenced their movement from the first day. He had calmed all inquietudes, dissipated all alarms, and revived all hopes.

I shall speak of the events of the 8th of November, only inasmuch as they have appeared to me, under a different aspect from that which all the accounts of this day have represented. There were even at the time, and in Paris itself, versions which did not agree; and it may be easily conceived, for then, as now and always, party spirit blending itself with such relations, its poison must necessarily infuse itself into them. What effects have I seen result from it! Falsehood was one of the slightest, which, however, is sufficiently serious when it affects the materials that will hereafter serve for the compilation of history.

There is one fact in particular, of which the report was first spread by malevolence, which the friends of Bonaparte have disdained to combat, and which has been finally adopted by credulity and folly—it is the alarm with which Bonaparte is alleged to have been seized on entering the hall of the Five Hundred at St. Cloud on the 9th of

* First, The 31st of May, the fall of the Girondins: 2. The 5th of April, the fall of the priest party: 3. The 27th of July: 4. The 2d of April, the defeat of Barrière, Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud-Varennes: 5. The 20th of May, execution of Romme, Soubrani, &c., and defeat of the Jacobins: 6. The 5th of October, the Directorial government: 7. The 5th of September, the second emigration: 8. The 19th of June, fight of the Directors among themselves; Sieyes and Barras conquer Merlin of Douai, Treilhard, &c.: 9. The days of November, and the establishment of the Consular Government.

November. This absurd version would fall to the ground of itself, if it were not found in some works which offer, in appearance, a guarantee for the faith they demand. In one of these works, the author goes so far as to assert, that it was he who recalled General Bonaparte to himself, by observing to him that he was speaking without knowing what he said. I take the liberty of remarking to him, in my turn, that he never dared suffer such words to reach the ears of General Bonaparte. I say this, because to permit such a statement to remain uncontradicted, is to give a totally erroneous impression of the character of Bonaparte.

First, then, it is false that he spoke on the 9th of November to the Council of Five Hundred in the form of a discourse. It was on the preceding evening, to the Ancients, that he used these remarkable words: "Let us not seek in the past examples that may retard our progress. Nothing in history resembles the close of the 18th century: nothing in the close of the 18th century resembles the present moment! We demand a republic founded upon true liberty. We will have it—I swear it!"

This discourse, much longer than the few words I have quoted, bears no resemblance to a crowd of incoherent phrases, as *he who recalled General Bonaparte to himself* would represent it. This oration, pronounced in the Council of Ancients the 18th of Brumaire, preceded the review which took place in the Tuileries, and the remarkable allocution which General Bonaparte addressed to Bottot, the envoy of the Directory—"What have you done with this France which I left you so glorious? I left you peace—I return, and find war. I left you victories—I find reverses. I left you the millions of Italy—I find despoiling laws and misery throughout!" Truly, there was vigour enough in these words to remove all idea of pusillanimity. Nevertheless, on the 8th of November he was in the midst of Paris. The revolution was far from being consummated, and he was in real danger.

With respect to the emotion observed in General Bonaparte in the Hall of the Five Hundred at St. Cloud, the following is its true explication. It is no presumption, but the actual fact: On the General's entering the orangery, he no sooner appeared than violent outcries were raised against him, "Down with the Cromwell!" "No Dictator!" "Outlaw him!" General Bonaparte knew very well that the Council of Five Hundred was composed of ultra republicans, and of enthusiastic partisans of the constitution of the year *III.*; but he had depended too much upon the success of Lucien's exertions, who had laboured all night to strengthen his brother's party. *It is a*

fact, that this reception, without alarming him to the extent of enchaining his faculties, not only induced surprise, but that surprise for the moment deprived him of the words he would have opposed to these vociferations. He reflected how he should act, and his resolution was speedily taken. It was necessary to decide the question instantly, which could not have been done had the Five Hundred entered upon discussion. He might even have been assassinated; and if he had run the risk, it would not have been a display of valour, but of folly. With an eagle's glance he saw through the circumstances which surrounded him. This self-consultation lasted perhaps some minutes, and the untalented, judging by themselves, attributed this silence and inaction to fear. But he was not surrounded by those only who were thus incapable of appreciating his sentiments. I also have collected the opinions of eyewitnesses, who, capable of judging calmly, and possessing perhaps as much merit as he whom they looked on, have read his great mind without doing it injustice.

It is difficult to believe all the things reported to be said and done in the very short space of time which General Bonaparte passed in the hall of the Council of Five Hundred; it was but an apparition. And with the same frankness with which I have defended him from the imputation of cowardice, I will add, that I do not believe that a poniard was raised against him; it was Lucien who, after his brother's departure, was in real danger.

I know that much has been said of this attempted assassination; perhaps General Bonaparte believed it himself; at least it is true that when he was in the court of the palace he told it to the soldiers; but, I repeat, I do not believe it. It is not, however, any doubt of the hatred of Péné Arena against Bonaparte which makes me question the fact; but simply the manner in which the events are said to have taken place. One peculiarity is sufficiently remarkable, that this same day, Bonaparte, in addressing the troops, never stood still, and that he moved only in a zigzag direction. For why? Was he afraid of a pistol-shot from the windows? This conjecture may be correct.

My brother-in-law was on the palace steps when Bonaparte came down. His friendship for Lucien made him extremely anxious for the fate of the young Tribune. He saw his brother making his harangue, and his tortuous promenade, without taking any step to provide assistance for the President of the Council, who meanwhile might be murdered in his curule chair. He approached Bonaparte, and mentioned Lucien: the General immediately turned towards an officer who was a few paces distant from him. "Colonel Dumoulin,"

said he, "take a battalion of grenadiers, and hasten to my brother's deliverance."

The choice which General Bonaparte made of this officer, shows the tact with which he could seize the smallest circumstances that could be turned to his advantage. Colonel Dumoulin was the first aide-de-camp of General Brune, commander-in-chief of a triumphant army in Holland. Already Moreau had given his public pledge in acting as guard to the directors. The first aide-de-camp of Brune, commanding the battalion which dispersed the opposing council, would cause the impression that Brune himself was in concert with Bonaparte. This assurance was with many people a more than sufficient counterpoise to the fear which the retirement of Jourdan and Bernadotte, both known as warm republicans, had inspired. I am sure that Bonaparte had at first no fixed idea upon this subject; but, with that lively and rapid conception which embraced all things with a single glance, he no sooner perceived Colonel Dumoulin than his name started from his lips.

At length we possessed a government which promised some sort of security for the future. My mother, whose heart always saw the fair side of every thing that was done by a Bonaparte, at first considered this action of Napoleon only as that of a young enthusiast desirous of liberating his country from the evils by which it was desolated. Never thinking seriously upon politics, she knew the revolution only by its horrors and its noise. That of the 8th of November, therefore, which was accomplished without firing a gun, she could not understand to be a revolution: though perhaps there never had been one more important for us and for Europe. It was the ninth change in seven years, not of the government, but of the pilot at the helm. Lucien was almost immediately called to the ministry of the interior. He had desired another office: but at this period, he encountered in Fouché an enemy who was determined upon his destruction, and who never ceased his intrigues till his object was consummated. The confidence which Napoleon, without any attachment to him, placed in this man, was always an enigma to me. He had sense and talent no doubt: but did this advantage neutralize the importance of the danger with which he surrounded Napoleon? *No.* And again, the same *no* is applicable to another genius far superior to Fouché, who, sharing with him the confidence of Bonaparte, equally contributed to his destruction.*

* In the tedious hours of his confinement at St. Helena, the victim prisoner must have considered with repentance, his continual obstinacy in refusing atten-

Madame Lucien was not satisfied with her husband's change of fortune; all this grand display alarmed her. She was obliged now to give up her time to duties which with reason she thought far less important than those she had hitherto fulfilled with so much pleasure. She frequently came in a morning to enumerate her troubles to my mother, and to take her advice upon the new and difficult position in which she was placed. But a circumstance which she was far from foreseeing, gave her comfort and happiness: it was the change in her favour which took place in the sentiments of her brother-in-law. The penetration of the First Consul was too just for the excellent qualities which animated Madame Lucien's heart to escape him; and he soon attached himself to her with a truly fraternal regard.

I must not omit to mention a visit which, a short time before these great events, we made to Lucien's villa of le Plessis Chamant. All Napoleon's family, at that time, possessed fine country-houses, in which they took pleasure to receive society. Joseph had Morfontaine;* Lucien, le Plessis Chamant; Madame Leclerc, Montgobert. At Morfontaine, excursions upon the lakes, public readings, billiards, literature, ghost stories more or less mysterious, a perfect ease and liberty, gave charms to the passing hour. To this must be added that which filled the measure of enjoyment, the most friendly, invariably friendly reception, which was always accorded by the master and mistress of the mansion. They did not admit every one, but when once any person was established as a member of their society, they were sure of experiencing the most courteous hospitality from Joseph Bonaparte and his lady.

Madame Lucien was very amiable; but her husband's temper was not always the same. That did not lessen the amusement to be found at le Plessis; perhaps it in some measure contributed to it. I do not remember in my whole life, even in its most joyous seasons, to have laughed so heartily, as during the five or six weeks I spent amongst a numerous party of guests at that villa. M. d'Offreville, from fifty-five to sixty years of age, a man of *great talents*, and of some *pretension* to extreme foppery, was the butt of our mirth and the grand subject of our entertainment. He was a poet, and highly satisfied

tion to the numerous notices given him respecting one of these two personages. I shall relate a conversation I had on this subject with the Emperor in 1806.

* I have read, I know not where, that Madame Bonaparte had deposited with Joseph 40,000 francs to purchase for her this beautiful estate, and that he kept Morfontaine for himself. This is not true. Madame B. had bought Malmaison some time previously: and, besides, none but a silly mind could suppose that Morfontaine could be purchased for so trifling a sum.

with his compositions: which, together with the dignity he derived from having held, before the Revolution, the office of cloak-bearer to Monsieur, was the continual theme of his conversation. "It is true," he would sometimes remark, "I have been peculiarly fortunate in my poems: Voltaire, Racine, even Corneille, have some feeble passages, my poetry has none." Still, notwithstanding all this absurdity, and a figure, countenance, and costume by no means calculated to inspire the respect due to his years, he might have passed well enough in a crowd, if he had had more sense than to expose himself and his follies to the observation and ridicule of a young, gay, and satirical society.

Le Plessis Chamant is in a dull situation; the environs present nothing picturesque, and no shade is to be had nearer than the Forest of Senlis, at some distance even from the gates of the park. What induced Lucien to fix upon this property, when villas of pleasure of the most inviting description were to be purchased in abundance, within a dozen leagues on all sides of Paris, I never could comprehend.

The subject of villas and country-seats reminds me of a terrible catastrophe, in the sequel of which I had an opportunity of remarking upon the First Consul's demeanour in an affair of interest. In the night between the 20th and 21st of April, of the year IV., the Chateau de Vitry, at that time the property of M. du Petitval, was entered by a troop of assassins, who murdered M. du Petitval, his mother-in-law, his sister-in-law, and three servants; the nurse escaped with an infant son in her arms, passing the hall filled with men in the dress of the police, and having drawn swords in their hands. Nothing was stolen; plate, diamonds, watches, and other valuables, all remained in their places: the papers only were missing. The relations of the victims immediately made an effort to obtain justice on the perpetrators of this inhuman crime; the preliminary steps were taken by the local authorities, the procès-verbeaux were drawn up; but suddenly these symptoms of activity relaxed, and before long the whole transaction remained involved in impenetrable mystery.

Three years after this horrible event, M. Dubois was appointed Prefect of the Police of Paris. Vitry was within his district, and he immediately showed an active interest in the affair. He demanded from the local magistrate all the documents in his possession. The judge who had taken the deposition was deceased; search was made among the rolls of his office, but in vain; no trace of the examinations could be found. It was concluded that all the documents must have been removed to the archives of the criminal tribunal; but the most minute investigation ended only in the conviction that not the smallest particle of evidence relating to this atrocious murder had been preserved.

Some terrible reflections arose out of the total absence of these documents, which certainly had at one time existed!

But the relations of the deceased continued to demand justice. I was one day in the apartment of Madame Bonaparte when the First Consul was present; she was persuading him to admit a person who was in waiting, and to whom she had promised the favour of an introduction.

"I have already said," replied the First Consul, "that I would not give audience upon this affair; accusations without proof, however strong the presumption may be, have no other effect than to increase scandal. However," he added, after walking to and fro some time without speaking, "let your protégé come in: I will retire and re-enter as if by accident." I made a movement to withdraw, but was desired to remain; and M. de Bois-Préau was admitted, coming, as I learned from Madame Bonaparte, to solicit the First Consul's interference to obtain justice against the murderers of his relation, du Petitval. Madame Bonaparte approached him with an expression of lively interest; the First Consul almost immediately returned, and his lady introduced the stranger, who presented him with a memoir of several pages in length of close writing. The First Consul took it, glanced rapidly through it, but evidently gave it much attention. After some time he thus addressed M. de Bois-Préau:

"This, Monsieur, is a delicate affair; the horror of it increases its difficulty. Your accusations are founded only upon moral proofs; these are not sufficient before a legal tribunal; before the tribunal of opinion the case would be different. The wealth of those you accuse will not clear them before either, but it may be supposed that their position in society has afforded them the means of security." The First Consul, as he spoke, continued, according to custom, to walk about the room with his hands behind his back. What M. de Bois-Préau said to him I did not hear, but he replied, "I know it, I know it; but the proofs, the proofs are indispensable."—"Proof is no doubt necessary," said the petitioner; "nevertheless, General, I think, and all the friends and relations of the unfortunate victims think also, that if you, as the Chief of the State, would take vengeance into your hands, it would be secure."

The First Consul smiled. "You give me credit," said he, "for more than I possess, and for even more than I should choose to possess; a power which, if it were accorded me, I should certainly not make use of. Justice is open to you, why do you not invoke it? for myself, I regret that it is not within my province to assist you." He then saluted M. de Bois-Préau, who, understanding that his visit must

not be prolonged, retired with an air of melancholy which the First Consul probably remarked; for he said to him, when he had already reached the door, "I am truly sorry, I repeat to you, that I cannot oblige you in this case; particularly"—but here he stopped short, and taking from the mantel-piece the memoir M. de Bois-Préau had presented to him, held it out to its owner. "I entreat you to keep it, General," said the latter. The First Consul slightly knit his brows, and still extending his hand, made a movement indicative of impatience. "It is not a petition which I have had the honour to commit to you," continued M. de Bois-Préau; "it is but a narrative of this melancholy event, and only something more circumstantial than that given by the journals of the time." The First Consul hesitated an instant; then replaced the manuscript on the mantel-piece, saying, with a gracious smile of dismissal, "I accept it then as a narrative."

When the petitioner had departed, the First Consul resumed the memoir, and read it again with great attention. He walked as he read, and words escaped him at intervals which showed the profound indignation it inspired. "It is infamous!" he at length exclaimed. "Our children will believe that Frenchmen have been slaughtered by Frenchmen within a league of Paris, and that the crime has not been instantly revenged by the laws."

Then, after again perusing the memoir, still walking rapidly, he added, "It is incredible: a police inert, if not guilty. Dubois would not have acted thus. Let citizen Cambacérès be informed that I wish to speak to him," continued he, turning to Duroc, and left the room, shutting the door with great violence. When he was gone, Madame Bonaparte told us that the First Consul had long formed an opinion upon this subject: murders were at that time frequent, but the circumstances of this were peculiarly striking.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The winter of 1800—The restoration of order and general security—Massena, and the siege of Genoa—Moreau's triumphs on the Rhine—The campaign of Marengo—Passage of Mount St. Bernard—Marmont's artillery—Inconceivable effect produced at Paris by the news of the victory—Bonfires—Universal joy—News from the army—Particulars of the battle of Marengo—The death of Desaix—Kellerman's admirable charge—Folly of General Melas—Habits of Napoleon in conversing with strangers—De Bubna—Services of the Kellermans, father and son—Landing of Junot at Marseilles—Grief of the aides-de-camp of Desaix.

THE winter of 1800 was very brilliant in comparison to those which had preceded it. Confidence was restored; every one felt the same sentiments towards General Bonaparte, and at this epoch they were those of attachment. How fine a destiny has he destroyed! What opportunities has he lost! How much was he beloved at that period! Yes, beloved, generally beloved; and where affection did not exist, admiration and confidence did. The emigrants returned in great numbers, and had every reason to be satisfied with the reception they met with; if they had vexations to endure from Fouché, on application to the First Consul they were sure to obtain justice. What I am now saying is the truth. I feel that many persons, on reading these Memoirs, will throw my volumes aside with ill-humour: but no other object guides my pen than that of making Napoleon known as I have seen and judged him. I think myself entitled to do so, because I do not believe that any mirror is capable of reflecting him, in all periods of his life, so clearly as my memory can do. I shall not always find colours sufficiently pure and brilliant to paint him with, but then, as now, I shall say what I have felt, and describe him as I have known him. To many, Napoleon may have appeared a mere character of illusion, to me he was all reality. The epochs of his glories and those of his faults are entire in my remembrance; the golden vapour which envelopes the first, and the veil which covers the last, are not impervious to my eye.

The First Consul knew too well that the success of Massena, in the brilliant affair of Zurich, though it had retarded, had by no means overcome the danger with which we were threatened. Austria, irri-

tated by so many reverses when she had reckoned upon victories, had determined upon a final effort for our destruction, and France was again threatened. General Massena, after having resisted a combined Russian and Austrian force of threefold his numbers, had retired upon Genoa, where he was soon shut up with fifteen thousand men and a population of one hundred thousand souls; he sustained a siege of fifty-two days, which should conduce more to his renown than all his victories. The brave Suchet, separated from his General-in-chief, effected a retreat upon Nice, and, in concert with Soult and Compan, exhibited prodigies of valour and talent. But almost all the passages of Italy were open, and the Austrians, with General Melas at their head, prepared to make us lament the glory of Zurich; General Otto continued the blockade of Genoa, rejoiced to detain in captivity the conqueror of the Austro-Russian army.

The First Consul then took one of those resolutions to which genius only is competent. The passage of St. Bernard was accomplished. Suwaroff had the preceding year declined this enterprise. Napoleon saw its almost impossibility, but saw it only to conquer. The index of his powerful hand extended to its glassy summits, and the obstacles disappeared. Every thing became possible to the exertions of those men whose talents his penetration had discovered. General Marmont, commander of the artillery, found means to transport the cannon across the most frightful precipices; he caused the trunks of large trees to be hollowed into the form of troughs, and placing the cannons and howitzers in them, was thus enabled to have them drawn to the most elevated summit of the pass. The journals have commented largely on this famous passage of St. Bernard; poetry has celebrated, and the arts have delineated it; but nothing can, at this distance of time, convey an idea of the enthusiasm it communicated to the parties interested in the operation: the letters written from Milan, Suza, Verceil, and la Brunette, by those who, having traversed the Alps, were reconquering Italy, painted in glowing colours the brilliancy of this undertaking. We had many friends in that heroic army, which was executing the grandest plan the head of man ever conceived, and it was nearly accomplished by the successful passage of St. Bernard. The advantages to be derived from it were evident to every one throughout France; mothers, sisters, wives, and friends received news from the army with an energy of enthusiasm not to be described, and never to be forgotten. When my thoughts revert to this epoch, they recall sensations which have never been equalled, or but once, and on what occasion I shall hereafter describe. But in the spring of 1800, perhaps, my sixteenth year enhanced the

brilliant colouring of that picture which I contemplated with charmed eyes. It is possible, and I am willing to believe it. Why deny these illusions? They pass away but too speedily.

While the French penetrated into Italy by three passes, which the folly of General Melas had left unguarded, General Moreau, who *then* loved his country, was acquiring celebrity on the banks of the Rhine. The passage of this river, the taking of Fribourg and Memmingen, the battles of Eugen, Bibernach, and Moeskirch, and a multitude of partial engagements, in which the Austrians lost more than 25,000 in killed and wounded, without calculating the prisoners, all these were the results of a campaign of thirty-three days! Ah! if Moreau had always acted thus, how proud would his country have been of his name.*

During the campaign of Marengo, Paris became almost a solitude; from Paris to Turin the road was covered with travellers, who, urged by motives of interest, some personal, some general, went to meet the news they were too impatient to await. But this period of expectation was of short continuance. The First Consul crossed Saint-Bernard on the 20th of May. On the 21st of June intelligence of the battle of Marengo reached Paris. The effect of this important victory was to raise the funds from twenty-nine to thirty-five francs: six months previous they were only at eleven. On that day we had breakfasted and dined at Saint-Mandé. The house being solitary, and no one but ourselves arriving in the village from Paris; when we returned to town in the evening, we received the news amidst all that delirium of joy which inebriated the people of the Faubourgs, always so vehement in the expression of their sentiments. Two hundred bonfires were blazing at once in the quarter we had to pass through, and the populace dancing round them, were crying, *Vive la République! Vive le Premier Consul! Vive l'Armée!* embracing and congratulating each other as upon a personal and family festivity. A circuitous route home gave us an opportunity of enjoying a truly fine spectacle, that of a great people affectionate and grateful. "Have you seen," said one to another, "how he writes to the other consuls? That is our man! '*I hope the people of France will be satisfied with its army.*'"— "Yes, yes," was exclaimed from all sides, "the people are satisfied," and shouts of *Vive la République! Vive Bonaparte!* were redoubled. My

* The campaign of the Rhine, which began the 26th of April, 1800, is one of the most glorious military movements of Moreau. Between that day and the 29th of May, the Austrians were not only driven across the Rhine, but were obliged to retire beyond Ausbourg.

brother and I shared the joyful enthusiasm; my mother was more calm. "We shall see hereafter," said she; "Moreau has done great things, of which nothing is said." The coolness which subsisted between my mother and General Bonaparte, rendered her unjust to him; Albert and I told her so jestingly. "It is impossible," said she: but repeated, "We shall see."

Some time afterwards, when the officers of all ranks were returning to Paris, and different accounts of the battle began to circulate, the conduct of General Kellerman excited universal admiration, and the silence of the First Consul upon it, caused equal astonishment. I may affirm, that all those who returned from the army in Italy at that time, related the event in similar terms.

The action of General Kellerman is then one of the finest of our military triumphs. I do not propose to settle the question of the gain or loss of this battle; it is one of those great difficulties which I have heard gravely discussed by men who could never emerge from their habitual mediocrity, and upon which I have heard the greatest military characters of the age deliver their opinions; while my female ears, open with all humility to the dictation of such men, for example, as Massena, have enabled me to found my own judgment upon theirs. At about five o'clock Desaix fell, struck to the heart by a ball as he led a division of four thousand men against an army of twenty thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry, and whose numerical strength was doubled by the pride of victory. The French rendered desperate by the loss of a general they adored, endeavoured in vain to revenge his death; all fell into disorder. The 9th light infantry wavered, then gave way, and at length in its precipitate retreat drew the line with it, and all appeared lost. It was then, that, by one of those inspirations upon which the destiny of armies and empires sometimes depends, General Kellerman made, with five hundred horse, that admirable charge which decided the fate of the day. Masked by mulberry-trees, from the branches of which the vines they supported hung down in clustering garlands, and which veiled his movements from the enemy, General Kellerman observed the events of the battle, ready to give his assistance wherever it would be most effectual.

Upon the retreat of our troops, the Austrian column suffered itself to be hurried on by the ardour of pursuit. It passed General Kellerman with an inconsiderate rapidity, and presented a defenceless flank; of this fault he profited with that promptitude of apprehension which distinguishes the skilful warrior. He fell upon the Austrians like a thunderbolt amidst their victorious disorder, and, finding them un-

protected by their fire-arms, made in an instant more than six thousand prisoners, among whom was General Zach, chief of the staff, and the soul of the Austrian army.

General Melas, who, in perfect security of victory, had already resumed his route to Alexandria, imagined himself the victim of a terrific enchantment when he found himself surrounded on all sides; for the French army was to pass the Bormida at the break of day, and he knew that the brave Suchet was on his rear, his advanced guard having already passed the mountains. When therefore, on the morning of the 15th, General Gardane presented himself at one of the têtes-de-pont of the Bormida, a parley was proposed, and General Melas capitulated. The character of this General, at all times either perfectly credulous or wholly incredulous, made a strange exhibition throughout the campaign! Is it not curious to find that Melas and his council deciding, on the 13th of June, the very eve of the battle of Marengo, "that the existence of the army of reserve was completely unknown to them; and that as the instructions of the Aulic Council mentioned only Massena's army, the difficult position in which they were placed was entirely the fault of the ministry, and not at all to be attributed to the General?"

The author of the "Mémorial du Dépôt de la Guerre" is right in the opinion that the Emperor acquired much curious information respecting his campaigns against the Austrians, from his conversations with general officers and statesmen, Austrian, Bavarian, and Saxon. I have seen him conversing for two hours together with the most distinguished men in Germany, both in the military and diplomatic professions; and when he had ended, and the interlocutor was departed, he has exclaimed, rubbing his hands, "There is information for twenty pages of my commentary."

Once, either at Compiègne or at Fontainebleau, having just closed a long interview with a person, to whom he was not sparing of his questions, and who replied to him with such clearness and precision, and at the same time with such rapidity, that the Emperor was surprised; he stopped, and fixed his eyes upon him with so striking an expression of countenance, that he had no occasion to speak his thoughts. The interlocutor was not intimidated, and his physiognomy, always calm, but not inanimate, betrayed not the slightest emotion. When he was gone, the Emperor remarked to Junot, "That is one of the most subtile men I know, and yet I believe him to be honest. Just now he answered all my questions with such extraordinary frankness, that for a moment I believed he was making game of me;" and the Emperor's features, as he walked about the room, wore that musing smile which

gave such a charm to his countenance. "But no!" he continued, "he is right; the best diplomacy is to go straight to the object. And then he is a brave man. Be particular in your attentions to him in your quality of Governor of Paris, do you understand me?" This man was M. de Bubna.

I now return to the singular explanation of General Melas; is it not really comic? But, after all, whether the conquerors were conquered by their own faults or those of others, the grand affair was to take skilful advantage of their error, and this General Kellerman did. But why was he refused in his own country a due share in the glory of the day? Even admitting that the First Consul had ordered this famous charge, he could only have done so vaguely, and the result of its splendid execution, which decided the fate of Italy and France, deserved some better recompense than the cold words of approbation, "You have made a pretty good charge."

It has been said that the Emperor, in making the father of General Kellerman a Marshal, Senator, and Duke de Valmy, and in giving great commands to the son, had discharged his debt of gratitude. Now I think, first, that an affectionate word is of as much value in such cases as a more solid recompense. Then, Marshal Kellerman was creditor to the state for the battle of Valmy, and this debt had nothing in common with that of his son, whose military and political reputation rested on other services besides the battle of Marengo. I believe, then, that the Emperor would have done him no more than justice in appointing him Inspector or Colonel General, and in giving him, during his father's lifetime, the title of Duke of Marengo. He had well named Lannes, Duke of Montebello. Lannes, in gaining that battle, prepared the triumph of Marengo: General Kellerman decided it.

The day of the battle of Marengo, Junot, who had been taken prisoner by the English on quitting Egypt, landed at Marseilles, and reached his native land once more, after several months' captivity. A thousand times he has repeated to me, how greatly the joy of his return would have been damped had he been conscious that the fields of Italy were again the scenes of contest, and that he could not fight at his General's side. Alas! the same day, and almost at the same hour, while Desaix fell before the murderous cannon of Austria on the field of Marengo, the poniard which treason had committed to the hand of a fanatic, terminated the existence of Kléber!* The pride of our armies, they both perished on the same day, and nearly at the same hour.

* Kléber was assassinated at Cairo by a Turk, sent for that purpose by the Vizir, soon after the defeat of the latter at Heliopolis.

That I may have no further occasion to revert to this battle, I will now state that my opinion upon the facts here related, has been inculcated by men who were witnesses of the struggle, or were thoroughly masters of its operation by report. Frequently, during this year of the battle of Marengo, which was also that of my marriage, have I seen a dinner-party prolonged until nine o'clock, because Bessières, Lannes, Eugène, Duroc, or Berthier, or some others of his companions in arms, or all together, explained to Junot, who was greedy of the most trifling details, all those of this memorable affair. The table then became the plain of Marengo; a group of decanters at the head stood for the village, the candelabras at the bottom figured as the towns of Tortona and Alexandria, and the pears, the filberts, and bunches of grapes represented, as well as they could, the Austrian and Hungarian regiments, and our brave troops. A woman certainly can have no pretensions to understand the military science; but it is a fact, that when in 1818, I passed through Alexandria on my road to France, I remained a long time at Marengo, examined its environs, and visited every tree; from having so frequently heard all the particulars of this famous battle described, I soon found myself on a spot replete with recollections which every surrounding object seemed to awaken in my mind. I brought away two views of the village of Marengo; one which I took from the plain, and another from a point where the mistress of the little inn had placed me, to enable me to introduce into my sketch a tree under which they at first laid the unfortunate Desaix, believing that he still breathed.

Desaix, it is well known, had several aides-de-camp. Amongst the number were two who made themselves remarkable by the excess of their grief. One of them, in a voice broken by sobs, exclaimed, "Ah! my General! why have I survived you? and the army—and France! What a loss have both suffered!" And the good young man shed tears of sincerity over the corpse of him whom he regretted as the young * * * regretted Turenne. The other aide-de-camp was also young, and he wept as earnestly, but his grief displayed itself in a different manner. "Ah, my God! my General is dead! What will become of me? My God! what will become of me?" I have heard the First Consul imitate the accents of these young officers; one of them still wept his general many years after his death. It was Rapp, a worthy and honest creature, a good comrade, and in all respects a man much above the degree in which he had fixed himself by the abruptness and apparent roughness of his manners.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Fêtes in Paris, and a ball at Lucien Bonaparte's—The Gallery of the Duke de Brissac—Madame Bonaparte and Madame Lucien—First attempt at royal assumptions—Moreau's victories on the Danube—Massena's judgment on the battle of Hochstedt—Secret treaty between Austria and England—France resumes her place amongst the powers of Europe—Affecting death of Madame Lucien—Last visit to her—Sepulchral monument at le Plessis Chamant.

The winter of 1800, I have observed, had been very brilliant. Lucien Bonaparte, who then occupied, as Minister of the Interior, the hotel de Brissac, gave there some splendid fêtes in the gallery which the Duke de Brissac had added solely for this purpose. It is a fine gallery, though rather too narrow for its length, but upon the whole it perfectly answers its object, and is altogether the hall of festivity.

My mother occasionally took me to these balls; at one of them I remember Madame Bonaparte* took her seat at the upper end of the gallery, assuming already the attitude of sovereignty. The ladies all rose at her entrance and when she retired. The good and simple Christine followed her with a gentle smile upon her lips; and the remark was frequently made, that if the one was the wife of the First Consul, the Chief Magistrate of the republic, the other was the wife of his brother, and that Madame Bonaparte might, without derogation of dignity, have accorded the courtesies of society and family intercourse, by giving her arm to Madame Lucien, instead of requiring her to follow or precede her. But Christine *was* Madame Lucien, a name which awoke no good feeling in the mind of Madame Bonaparte, for between her and Lucien a mortal war subsisted.

Apparently, however, she was very friendly both with Lucien and his wife, and it was with an exterior of perfect complaisance that she thus obliged them to follow her. But the amusing part of the business was, that Lucien was wholly unconscious of these airs of superiority. The mild Christine often wept in private over the mortifications to

* Be it understood once for all, that in future whenever I use the term Madame Bonaparte, I speak of the wife of the First Consul. For Madame Bonaparte *the mother*, I shall always employ the latter title or her christian name.

which she was thus subjected; but she was careful to avoid irritating her husband, who would, without a doubt, have repaired instantly to the Tuileries, and there enacted a *scena*, before Madame Bonaparte, in which the First Consul would probably have supported him, for he had sincerely attached himself to Madame Lucien since he had learnt to appreciate her excellent qualities.

This recurrence to the winter of 1800, has made me lose sight of the glorious epoch of Marengo, to which I must now return; and for the present, during a long course of years we shall but march from victory to victory. We shall pay dearly for these days of gratification; but, at this price we may be content to suffer. While the First Consul was conqueror at Marengo, Moreau beat the Austrians on the left bank of the Danube; and on the same field of battle which witnessed the glory of Villars, the disgrace of Tallard and Marsin was effaced by that of General Kray. My French heart owes gratitude to General Moreau for this action. I have often heard Junot and Massena speak of this battle of Hochstedt. They said that the manœuvres by which Moreau obliged Kray to quit his camp at Ulm, were models in the art of war.

News was soon after received of a fresh proof of the hatred which England will never cease to bear towards us. On the 20th of June a treaty of subsidy was signed at Vienna between Austria and England. It specified that neither of the two powers should make a separate peace. England was to lend by it to Austria the sum of two millions sterling (forty-eight millions of francs), and this treaty was signed, these engagements were taken, when Austria was beaten by us on all sides. This kind of perseverance, even in misfortune, has something great in it. However, an armistice was concluded at Munich, on the 15th of July, between Austria and France, to suspend the operations in Germany, as that of Marengo had done in Italy.

While France thus arose once more great and powerful amongst the nations, the interior assumed a new life, and quite another aspect. Confidence in the First Consul was the pervading sentiment of all classes. Commerce looked up with hope; the clergy obtained a glimpse of the day when they would be protected; while the nobility and superior financiers, being Frenchmen, were bound to love glory, and by attaching themselves to him, were likely to obtain it in abundance.

Towards this epoch we experienced a heavy affliction in the death of Madame Lucien. I was affected by it as if she had been connected with us by closer ties than those of friendship. There were not, it is true, between us all the points of contact which constitute an intimate

connexion; but our friendship had strengthened materially since her residence in Paris; our intercourse, if not familiar, was constant; and her matured imagination, the justness of her reasoning, her love for her husband, which taught her to make his gratification her chief object, were all circumstances which daily endeared her to us. My mother, who was tenderly attached to her, bitterly lamented her loss.

She was in the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy. It was said, that being menaced with a miscarriage, she had not been properly treated, and the event spoke for itself. In a few weeks the amiable Christine was no more.

We went to see her the day before her death. No visits, it may easily be believed, were permitted; but our intimacy gave us almost the rights of relationship. We found her in a small room adjoining her bed-room. Her apartment had been changed to admit more air, for she was suffocating; and to facilitate her respiration, she was lying on a camp bed with two mattresses. This change afforded her some relief, she told us, adding, with a sweet and melancholy smile, but without any accent of complaint, "This bed reminds me of my own bed at St. Maximin,—I can neither sleep nor breathe under those thick curtains, and upon those beds of down." At each word she looked at my mother with a remarkable expression. Her eyes were animated by fever, her cheeks, one in particular, were highly coloured, and varied in tint with every emotion which agitated her, as is always the case with persons suffering under a sudden attack of consumption. "Christine," said Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, "you know you must not talk, the physicians have positively forbidden it: and if you mean to recover you must attend to them." The patient shook her head, with the smile so afflicting to those who know that but few days, perhaps but few hours only, are between that moment and dissolution.

"Laurette," said Madame Lucien, "come near me, for I am sure that a death-bed does not alarm you." She took my hand; she perceived the effect which its burning pressure made upon me. "Ah!" said she, "I meant your mother; to you I am but a stranger, and I frighten you, do I not?" I wept, and only replied by embracing her. She pushed me gently away, saying: "No, no, do not embrace me, the air I breathe is poisonous. When I recover, as mamma says—"

We took leave, and this adieu was the last. We saw her no more. She died the following day. As soon as my mother received the intelligence, she ordered her horses and hastened to the Hotel of the Interior; Lucien was at Neuilly. My mother went there to seek him, but we were not permitted to see him. My brother-in-law came to our carriage to tell us that he was not in a state to speak even to

his sisters or his mother. "I have torn him from that unfortunate house," said he, "where every thing reminds him of the loss he has just experienced. He was in the most violent despair."

Madame Lucien was buried in the park of the mansion at le Plessis Chamant. Her husband erected there to her memory a monument of white marble, surrounded by an iron palisade. When he went to le Plessis, he took his daughters there, that they might pray with him, young as they were. I have heard these notions ridiculed; but for my own part, being of opinion that the dead may be long lamented, I can easily believe that Madame Lucien was a character to excite such regret, and that it might be great and long-during. I shall never forget when my mother was on the point of death in 1799, Madame Lucien was with Madame Bonaparte the mother, and that they came to seek and comfort the poor young girl whom both believed an orphan!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

An offer of marriage, and my mother's projects—Madame de Caseaux's interference—Junot's arrival at Paris—His interview with the First Consul at Malmaison—Long and interesting conversation of Junot with Bonaparte—The First Consul threatened with danger—Othello and Madame Fourès—Bonaparte's sentiments towards Kléber, and his agitation—His advice to Junot, and the appointment of Junot to the command of Paris—Junot lodges at Méo's—His predilections for Burgundians—His hotel in the Rue de Verneuil—Project for his marriage—Its rupture—Junot's first visit to my mother, and the society of the Faubourg St. Germain—Translation of the body of Turenne to the Invalids.

I was now arrived at an epoch always remarkable in the life of a woman, and particularly so in mine, on account of the immense change which then took place in my situation. I speak of my marriage. As it renewed the bonds formerly subsisting between my family and that of the First Consul, I am bound to give a faithful account of all the circumstances attending it. They all relate even more to the First Consul than to Junot and myself; and they place him in a light no way connected with the days of his glory, military or political.

My mother was very unwell; the cruel malady under which she at length succumbed, had already taken possession of her. She went out but little; reclined the greater part of the day upon her sofa, and

received in the evening the friends who came to bear her company. One of the most assiduous of these was Madame de Caseaux, who was sincerely attached to her. I was myself intimately connected with this lady's daughter, and few days passed that did not bring us together.

My mother at that time had a marriage for me in contemplation; probably it might have conduced to my happiness, but Madame de Caseaux thought not, on account of the great difference of age between my mother's intended son-in-law and myself. "Laurette, Laurette," said she, enforcing her words with her extended finger, "it is not wise, my child, to marry one's grandfather."

My mother did not like contradiction in the most trivial matters; and it may be easily conceived, that the very reasonable opposition of her devoted friend, on an affair of so much importance, irritated her extremely. Her displeasure proceeded to the extent of preventing my visits to Madame de Caseaux, when she was unable to accompany me herself; on this point I must say she was unjust to her friend, who would speak her mind to her, or to me before her, on the subject of this marriage, but never permitted herself to mention it except in her presence; her rigid principles absolutely interdicting such an interference in the relations of mother and child.

As soon as Junot arrived in Paris, he hastened to his General, who was then at Malmaison. What events had taken place since their separation! What miracles had not one man accomplished! How many fresh laurels were flourishing around him! Junot, in approaching him, was oppressed by a thousand sentiments, in which, no doubt, joy preponderated; but it was chastened by a profound respect, which "far from diminishing," he has often said to me, "his affection for Bonaparte, had no other effect than to increase it."

I did not, at the time of which I am now speaking, understand this as I have since done. It is a fact, that at this period Napoleon had about him five or six men whose sentiments towards him were inexplicable: they were more than devoted. Those who are dead have left no successors. I do not say that Napoleon has not since been served with attachment, and even devotedness; but every one reasons upon his own premises; and, I repeat, I have not since seen the same hallowed sentiment of which I now speak.

"Well, Junot," said the First Consul to him, as soon as they were alone, "so you were stupid enough to suffer yourself to be taken by those English. But, according to your letter to me from Marseilles, it would appear that they expected you. And, notwithstanding the postive orders I left with him, Kléber would not let you go? It is

all very well: apparently, he was afraid that I should have too many friends about me. What littleness! I know very well that he did not love me: but to adopt such paltry means of expressing his enmity! Have you seen his letter to the Directory?" Junot replied, that Duroc had given him it to read while at breakfast. "However," continued the First Consul, "his tragical end has cleared all accounts. I have had a great loss in him—but the irreparable loss, my friend, was Desaix! Desaix!—this is one of the misfortunes which strikes the country. I shall never console myself for the loss of Desaix!"* The First Consul continued his walk some time without speaking: he was visibly affected. But he never suffered a too lively emotion to be long observed; and returning to Junot, he said to him with an enchanting expression of goodness: "Well, and what do you propose to do? I have always told you that I would give you proofs of my friendship as soon as I was in a condition to do so. What are your views?. Are you inclined for the service?" and he looked askance at Junot with an air of good-humoured malice. "Have you a mind that I should send you to the army of the Rhine?"

Junot's colour heightened to crimson, which always happened when he was strongly affected. "Do you already wish to relieve yourself of me, my General? However, if you command it, I will go and let General Moreau know that the officers of the army in Italy have lost none of their courage in Egypt." "There now, my youngster, off at a word!" said the First Consul. "No, no, M. Junot, you do not quit me in such a hurry. I have a great regard for General Moreau; but not sufficient to make him a present of my best friends." And he gave Junot a pull of the ear.

"Junot," continued he, in a more serious tone, "I intend to appoint you Commandant of Paris. It is a place of confidence, particularly at this moment, and I cannot make a better choice. But"—and he looked narrowly round him, as they continued to walk, to observe whether any one was within reach of hearing,† "but you must reflect before you accept this post. You must at once add ten years to your age; for if it be necessary that the Commandant of Paris should be attached to my person, it is equally so that he should be extremely

* I have heard the Emperor, speaking of General Desaix in 1808, say, in the presence of above thirty persons, chiefly strangers,—"Desaix was the most estimable man I have known: if he had not died, I should have made him second to myself."

† This conversation took place in the park of Malmaison, and lasted above an hour; it was the second time that Junot had seen the First Consul, and not the first, as I have said above.

prudent, and that he should pay the utmost attention to whatever concerns my safety."—"Ah! my General!" exclaimed Junot.—"Be quiet," said the First Consul, "and speak low. Yes, you must watch over my safety. I am surrounded with dangers. I should make no effort to avoid them if I were still the General Bonaparte vegetating at Paris before and even after the 4th of October. Then my life was my own—I cared little for it; but now it is mine no longer; my destiny has been exalted, it is connected with that of a great nation, and for this reason my life is menaced. The powers of Europe, who would divide France, wish me out of their way." He knit his brow, drew his hand across his forehead, as if to banish an importunate idea; then, recovering an air of perfect calmness, he passed his arm under Junot's, and resumed the conversation on State affairs.

"I am about to appoint you Commandant of Paris, as I told you; but you must marry. That is not only suitable to the dignity of the situation you will occupy, but I know you, and require it of you for your own interest." After a long pause, he asked, "What is become of Othello?"*—"He is still in Egypt, General, but I intend to have him brought over by the first convoy."—The First Consul made an inclination of the head, in token of assent. "And the mother?" said he to Junot. "She also remains in Egypt, General; the Commissary-general has taken care of her."—"That is well." And here the First Consul stopped short, then walked on again; assumed an air of embarrassment not usual with him, and at length, standing before a tree, plucking off its leaves, after having cast his eyes round to see if any one were near. "And Pauline,† what has become of her?" asked he, with an accent of marked interest. "I have learned," he continued, with a bitter smile, "and that from the English journals, that Kléber treated her ill after my departure: my attachment, it would seem, was title sufficient to proscription from him! Those whom I loved had not the good fortune to please him." Junot made no answer. He felt, as he has since told me, that he could not accuse Kléber, who had just fallen by so tragical a death, and he was silent.

"Did you not hear?" said the First Consul, a little out of humour, and raising his voice. "Is it true that this man acted brutally, as the English relate, towards a woman so mild and amiable as this poor Bellilote?"—"I was not with General Kléber when all this took place, General; but I know that in fact she was not well used by him,

* A natural child which had been born to Junot in Egypt of a young Abyssinian slave named Araxarane.

† Madame Fourès.

and that when she had occasion to request her passport, it was by the intervention of Desgenettes that she obtained it, without which I believe the General-in-chief would have detained her a long time waiting for it." Junot smiled, without, however, any other idea than the detention of Madame Fourès: but Napoleon misunderstood the smile, and seizing Junot's arm, griped it so violently as to leave the marks of his hand; he became pale, and said with a voice trembling rather with anger than emotion: "What do you understand? What do you mean? Could that man . ." and he was so violently agitated that his words could not find utterance. It was not love, it was not even remembrance of love, which produced this almost alarming state: the simple suspicion that Kléber might have succeeded him in the affections of Madame Fourès set his brain on fire.

Junot recalled him to the true state of the question: he told him that Madame Fourès had only encountered difficulties in procuring a passport from General Klèber, which in fact was the case with every one who at that time desired to leave Egypt. But he repeated that she had met with every assistance from the excellent Desgenettes, who obtained all she required, and was towards her, as he is to every one, and always will be, kind and obliging.

The First Consul quickly recovered himself, and changed the subject of conversation, by recurring to that which was personal to Junot. He spoke at length upon the importance which he wished him to acquire in the situation of Commandant of Paris; and gave him such advice on this subject as a father would give to his son. This remarkable conversation lasted above an hour. I have omitted much of it that was interesting; but I have only been able to preserve with perfect accuracy that which related immediately to Junot and myself; and I have established it as a law, on no occasion to be departed from, never to record expressions of Napoleon upon uncertain recollections. Nothing is indifferent which proceeds from such a mouth; and we who have been attached to his person so closely and so long, are more than all others bound to be faithful in our reports of him.

On his arrival at Paris, Junot had not set up any establishment. Uncertain of his next destination, he thought it useless to make arrangements which an order to depart might compel him to abandon at a moment's notice. He lodged at the house of Méo, a good restaurateur of that period, and whose hotel had some resemblance to the fine establishment of Meurice; but when the First Consul announced to him the remarkable change which the place he was about to occupy would necessarily make in his situation he desired him at the same time to find a residence suitable to his new dignity; and Junot

requested his family, whom he had drawn around him at his hotel, to look out for one. There were, no doubt, great numbers in Paris, in the open and cheerful situations of the Faubourg St. Germain, or the Chaussée d'Antin, all handsome and newly decorated. I know not how they persuaded him to fix upon a hotel in the Rue de Verneuil, and even in the dullest and dirtiest part of it; but this house was hired, furnished, and ready for occupation in less than three weeks. Junot installed himself in it as Commandant of Paris in the course of the summer of 1800. With handsome carriages, the finest horses, and the best wines of Burgundy* in his cellars, he then commenced his search for a wife.

The First Consul had especially recommended him to marry a rich wife. "Willingly," replied Junot, "provided she please my taste; but how is that to be done, when almost all heiresses are superlatively ugly?"

He was one morning visiting a lady of his acquaintance, and who happened to be a friend of ours. He spoke of the order he had received from the First Consul to marry, and his own desire to enjoy domestic society. "Have you been to visit Madame de Permon?" inquired the person to whom he spoke. "No; and I reproach myself daily. But why ask?" "Because I believe that her daughter would suit you exactly." "Her daughter!" exclaimed Junot, "she was but a child when I went to Egypt."

"She is young, but no longer a child. She is sixteen. But attend: I have a great inclination to bestow her in marriage at the present moment, but her mother is so bent upon a match she proposes for her, and which has not common sense, for the intended is old enough to be her grandfather, that she turned a deaf ear when I opened my project to her the day before yesterday; though you must understand that the party in question is a charming bachelor, and one of the first names in France."

"And what would you have me do against all these obstacles?" said Junot laughing. "You tell me of a woman with twenty admirers; I do not like so many rivals. Mademoiselle Loulou, I believe that is what she was called, must be a little personage of great pretensions, a spoilt child, and thoroughly insupportable. No, no; I kiss

* A mania which Junot carried to excess, was that of being served only by Burgundians. It was natural that his countrymen should have the preference where there was an equality of talent: but if ever so heavy or stupid, the name of Burgundian was sufficient to ensure it. This was the history of the hotel in the Rue de Verneuil; a Burgundian found it for him, a Burgundian furnished it, and a Burgundian was put in charge of the establishment.

your hands;" and thus taking leave, he hastened out of the house.

From Madame d'Orsay, Junot went to call upon Madame Hamelin, another lady also of our acquaintance—an amiable woman who often visited my mother, and was much esteemed by her. Endowed with superior talents, she took pleasure, when I was in company with her, in bringing me into notice; a mark of kindness which goes direct to the hearts of women in general, and which mine was not backward in acknowledging.

Junot had scarcely entered, when his search for a wife became the topic of conversation. "Ah," said she, "there is a young person whom I should like to recommend to you, but she is about to marry, and must not be thought of.—"So," said Junot, "because she is going to marry, I am not to hear her name."—"Oh, with all my heart; you knew her when she was but a child. It is Mademoiselle de Permon."

Junot laughed; it seemed as if I haunted him. However, as Madame Hamelin's frankness and her intelligence were well known to him, and as she had pronounced my name with interest, he asked her some questions concerning me, which she answered with the feeling of an amiable and sensible woman.

"Why have you not paid your respects to her mother since your return?" she inquired; seeing his eyes fixed upon the garden with an air of absence. "I do not know, but it appears that I have done wisely," he replied, smiling; "for suppose I had fallen in love with your young friend."—"Well! you would have married her. Are you not wishing to marry?"—"But you have told me yourself that Madame de Permon has a strong desire to marry her to M. de V——, and if she wills it, it will be, for she is not one to yield her resolutions; I have seen instances of that, which I shall not forget." The same day, Junot, bearing in mind his conversation with Madame Hamelin, found out a person whom he knew to be intimate with my mother and me, and made himself acquainted with all that concerned me, and also with my mother's intentions respecting M. de V——; they were not doubtful, for she had no stronger desire than to conclude the marriage. Junot took his resolution at once: he had engaged to wait upon my mother, with Madame Hamelin, the following evening: however, he excused himself upon some pretext, but said nothing of the true cause.

At this time, my mother, much out of health, did not quit her sofa. My brother and I exerted ourselves to the utmost to lessen the ennui of her retirement. All her friends, and a crowd of acquaintances, assisted us in endeavouring to make her forget that she was

condemned to seclusion for the cure of a complaint from which she might never recover. Thanks to the care and advice of Dr. Backer, she was now mending: as she did not suffer, we were gay. We had music and singing, and when we were not afraid of too much noise, we danced to the sound of our own voices. We laughed and enjoyed ourselves; in short, we were happy.

Thus the summer of 1800 elapsed. The end of September arrived. A great change meanwhile had taken place in our family. The two marriages which my mother had proposed for me were broken off; one for pecuniary reasons; the other, because I had thrown myself at her feet, entreating her, by her love for me, not to make me a sacrifice, and my life miserable. My mother was perfectly amiable, and she loved me; she therefore broke off a marriage which, in other respects, was suitable enough, but to which I had so thorough an antipathy, that I should have ratified a doom of misery to myself and my husband, in saying, *Yes*. I was delighted with this change in my lot. All my friends, whether from attachment to me, or whether from that sentiment which makes a young girl always unwilling that her companion should marry before her—all my friends rejoiced in seeing me at liberty for the following winter.

One evening, it was the 21st of September, about a dozen persons were assembled in my mother's drawing-room, chatting, deciphering charades and laughing, when suddenly the door opened, and the valet-de-chambre announced, General Junot. In an instant, as by a stroke of magic, all was silence. This effect was so sudden and so striking, that the General was a little embarrassed; but my mother's reception of him reassured him. She held out her hand to him, reproached him in the most friendly manner for the long delay of his visit, made him sit down by her side, and attended only to him.

The General could not have chosen a worse day for his visit to my mother; no individual of his acquaintance was present. The whole party belonged to the Faubourg St. Germain, and the sort of gratification a general of the republic would find, amongst a circle of emigrants returned within the last six months, may be easily imagined. But my mother could act the mistress of the house to perfection. She saw that General Junot might find himself in a constrained position, and she exerted herself so effectually, that he was very soon as much at his ease by her side, as if he had been one of our most intimate associates.

The distinctive character of Junot's mind, was acuteness and rapidity of penetration. He understood that this was not the place for speaking of the First Consul. He was determined to hear nothing

to his prejudice; but neither would my mother, though she was no longer partial to him, have suffered any thing to be said against him in her house. Junot spoke of Egypt, of what he seen there which was foreign to our manners, with that ability which all who knew him are so well aware of. Albert, who had been spending the evening at Madame Leclerc's, soon came in, and his presence emboldened Junot to propose to my mother that she should, on the following day, go to the Hotel de Salm, to witness the procession which was to pass the Quai de Voltaire. The occasion was worth the trouble; it was the translation of the body of Turenne from the *Jardin des Plantes*, where it had been deposited since the violation of the tombs of St. Denis, to the *Musée des Augustins aux Invalides*. As Junot was to superintend the ceremony in his quality of Commandant of Paris, he was desirous that we should see him in his glory, and I believe this was the true motive of the zeal he manifested in overcoming my mother's objections on the score of her health. "Well then," said she, at length, "I will go and see our two heroes pass, the living and the dead; but the living soldier must promise to come and dine with me after he has seen M. le Maréchal installed in his new habitation, or I shall not go." Junot promised, and retired, leaving a most advantageous impression on a party, which, with the exception of my mother and brother, were certainly by no means predisposed in his favour.

The following day we repaired to the Hotel de Salm: we were conducted to a drawing-room, in which Junot had placed a large arm-chair, with pillows and a footstool for my mother: the valet-de-chambre of the General said he was ready to execute any orders that might be given to him.—"Does your master," replied my mother, "suppose I am one of those invalids to whom he is conveying the body of Turenne?" She was however very sensible of the attentions paid to her, and when Junot passed, he saluted us in so marked a manner, as to draw the attention of every one: a person in the crowd was heard to say, on seeing the general bow to my mother repeatedly, "No doubt that is the widow of the Marshal Turenne!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Junot's assiduities to my mother, and his silence towards me—First reports of my marriage with Junot—A family council—Visit of Junot—Demand of my hand—Consent of my mother and brother—Junot's declaration, and my embarrassment—Junot's thoughtlessness and silence towards Bonaparte—My mother's reproaches—Junot at the Tuileries—Duroc's goodnature—Conversation of Bonaparte with Junot relating to his marriage—Marriage portion and presents.

Ten days had elapsed, from the 21st of September, when Junot first presented himself at my mother's, and now regularly every night he repeated his visit. He never spoke to me, but placed himself beside my mother's sofa, chatted with her, or with any of his acquaintances who happened to be present, but never approached the group to which I belonged; and if at this epoch he had ceased to come to our house, I might have affirmed that I scarcely knew him.

But however undistinguished I had been by any attention on his part, the society in which we moved had already decided that I was his destined bride; the report was brought to me by my friend Laure de Caseaux, and with great indignation I repeated it to my mother and brother; they partook of my feelings upon the subject, and having received a summons to attend my drawing-master, I left them in my mother's bedroom, still discussing the steps to be pursued, for it was yet but noon, and on account of the weak state of her health she did not rise before that time.

While we were thus respectively engaged, a carriage drove up to the door, and a waiting-maid came in to inquire if General Junot could be admitted. "Yes, yes, let him come up," said my mother; "but, good God! what can bring him here at this hour?" Junot had scarcely entered the chamber before he asked permission to close the door; and, seating himself by the bedside, said to my mother, as he took her hand, that he was come to present a request, adding with a smile, "and it must be granted."—"If it be possible, it is done," said my mother. "That depends upon you and him," replied the General, turning to Albert. He stopped a moment, and then continued, in the tone of a person recovering from a violent embarrassment, "I am come to ask the hand of your daughter—will you grant

it me? I give you my word," and he proceeded in a tone of more assurance, "and it is that of a man of honour, that I will make her happy. I can offer her an establishment worthy of her and of her family. Come, Madame de Permon, answer me, with the frankness with which I put my request, Yes, or no."

"My dear General," said my mother, "I shall answer with all the frankness you have claimed, and which you know to belong to my character; and I will tell you that, a few minutes before your arrival, I was saying to Albert that you were the man whom, of all others, I should choose for my son-in-law."—"Indeed!" exclaimed Junot, joyfully. "Yes; but that says nothing for your request. First, you must understand that she has no fortune; her portion is too small to be of any value to you. Then, I am very ill, and I am not sure that my daughter will be willing to quit me at present. Besides, she is still very young. Reflect well upon all this, and add to it that my daughter has been educated amidst a society and in habits which it is very possible may displease you. Reflect for eight or ten days, and then come to me, and we will enter further into your projects."

"I will not wait twenty-four hours," said Junot, firmly. "Listen, Madame de Permon: I have not taken my present step without having fully made up my mind. Will you grant me your daughter? Will you, Permon, give me your sister? I love her, and I again swear to you I will make her as happy as a woman can be."

Albert approached General Junot, and, taking his hand, said, in a voice of emotion, "My dear Junot, I give you my sister with joy; and believe me, the day when I shall call you brother, will be one of the happiest of my life."—"And I," said my mother, extending her arms to him, "am happy beyond description in calling you my son." Junot, much moved, threw himself into her arms. "Well," said he, "and what will you think of me now?—that I am very childish and weak, I fear:" and, turning to my brother, he embraced him several times in a delirium of joy. "But now," said he, after a few moments, "I have still another favour to ask, one upon which I set a high value, for it is most interesting to me."

"What is it?" asked my mother. "I desire, extraordinary as it may appear to you, to be myself permitted to present my petition to your daughter." My mother exclaimed against this demand: such a thing had never been heard of—it was absolute folly. "That may be," said Junot, in a firm but respectful tone, "but I have determined upon it; and since you have received me, since I am now your son, why would you refuse me this favour? Besides, it is in your presence and her brother's that I would speak to her. "Ah, that makes a differ-

ence," said my mother: "but why this whim?"—"It is not a whim; it is, on the contrary, so very reasonable an idea, that I should never have believed myself capable of it. Do you consent?"

My mother answered "Yes:" and a messenger was despatched to my study, where I was drawing with M. Viglians, to summon me to my mother, an order which I obeyed immediately with the greatest tranquillity, for I supposed General Junot to be long since gone.

It is impossible to describe my sensations when, on opening the chamber-door, I perceived General Junot seated by my mother's bedside, holding one of her hands, and conversing in an animated manner with her. The General rose, offered me his place, took a seat beside me, then, having looked towards my mother, said to me in the most serious tone:

"Mademoiselle, I am happy enough to have obtained the consent of your mother and brother to my solicitation for your hand; but I have to assure you that this consent, otherwise so valuable to me, will become null, unless, at this moment, you can declare here in their presence, that you willingly acquiesce in it. The step I am at this moment taking, is not perhaps altogether consistent with established forms—I am aware it is not; but you will pardon me, if you reflect that I am a soldier, frank even to roughness, and desirous of ascertaining that in the most important act of my life I am not deceiving myself. Will you then condescend to tell me whether you will become my wife; and above all, whether you can do so without any repugnance?"*

Since I had been seated in the chair in which General Junot had placed me, I felt as if in one of those extraordinary dreams in which a delusive similitude fatigues and perplexes the mind. I heard distinctly, and understood what was said, but no part of it seemed to attach itself to my situation; and yet it was necessary to give an immediate answer in one word, upon which the fate of my whole life

* I have dwelt upon these particulars, all well known to a number of persons still living in Paris, in order to answer by facts to the vain declamations concerning my marriage in the Memorial of Las Casas. All these persons know whether my marriage was concluded because Junot believed me a Comnena. It is a point upon which I have a right to insist. It must be admitted that he did not take long to persuade; and my mother must have been a skilful magician, if, in the course of ten days, she had accomplished making a man who was a republican at heart, a child of the revolution, and the son of his own deeds, take to wife a young girl who was not pretty, and without fortune, only because her ancestors, three or four centuries before, had reigned at Constantinople. All that concerns us in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, is manifestly false, and I prove it by facts.

was to depend. The most perfect silence reigned in the apartment. Neither my mother nor my brother could with propriety interfere, and the General could only wait my answer. However, at the expiration of about ten minutes, seeing that my eyes still continued fixed on the ground, and that I did not reply, General Junot thought himself obliged to construe my silence into a refusal; and always impetuous, still more so perhaps in his sentiments than in his will, he insisted upon knowing his fate that very instant.

"I see," said he, with an accent of bitterness, "that Madame de Permon was right when she told me that her consent was nothing in this affair. Only, Mademoiselle, I entreat you to give me an answer, be it *yes* or *no*."

My brother, who saw the change in Junot's manner, inclined towards me, and whispered in my ear, "Take courage, love; speak the truth, he will not be offended, even if you refuse him." "Come, come, my child! you must answer the General," said my mother. "If you will not speak to him, give me your answer, and I will repeat it to him."

I was sensible that my situation began to be ridiculous, and that I ought to speak. But all the power upon earth could not have made me articulate a word, nor raise my eyes from the carpet. From my first entrance into the room my emotion had been so violent, that the palpitation of my heart threatened to burst my corset. The blood now mounted to my head with such violence, that I heard nothing but a sharp singing in my ears, and saw nothing but a moving rainbow. I felt a violent pain, and raising my hand to my forehead, stood up and made my escape so suddenly, that my brother had not time to detain me. He ran after me, but could no where find me. The fact was, that, as if started by an invisible power, I had mounted the stairs with such rapidity, that in two seconds I had reached the top of the house, and on recovering my recollection, found myself in the attic. I came down again, and going to take refuge in my brother's apartments, met him returning from a search for me. He scolded me for being so unreasonable. I wept, and reproached him bitterly for the scene which had just taken place. He excused himself, embraced me, and drew me into a conversation which calmed my spirits; but he could by no means persuade me to return to my mother's room. I was resolute not to appear there again till General Junot was gone.

My brother, on his return, addressed the General, whom he found still much agitated. "I was," said he, "my dear General, for a moment of your opinion, and permitted my sister to be brought here. But I now see that we have acted in this matter like children, and she,

young as she is, has convinced me of it." "Where is my poor Loulou then?" said my mother. "I told you, my dear Junot, that such a step was absurd. Where is she?"—"In my room," said Albert, "where I have promised her that she shall not be molested."—"And my answer?" said Junot, with a gloomy air.—"Your answer, my friend, is as favourable as you can desire. My sister will be proud to bear your name—I repeat her own words; for any other sentiment you cannot ask it of her without disrespect."—"I am satisfied!" exclaimed Junot, embracing my brother. "She will be proud to bear my name, and I am content."

The conversation now became more calm, and after a short interval, my mother said to Junot: "But tell me how you have achieved the greatest of your victories; how have you induced the First Consul to give his consent to your marriage with my daughter?"—"He does not know it yet," replied Junot.—"He does not know it?" exclaimed my mother; "you are come to ask my daughter in marriage, and the First Consul does not know it? Permit me to observe, my dear General, that your conduct has been very inconsiderate." My brother has since told me that he was at the moment of my mother's opinion. "I request you, Madam, to inform me in what respect my conduct can be blameable," Junot replied, with some *hauteur*.

"How can you ask such a question? Do you not know the coldness, and even disunion, which has succeeded to the friendship that once existed between the First Consul and myself? Do you think that he will consent to my daughter becoming your wife, and especially without fortune? and what, let me ask, would you do, if, when you communicate your intended marriage to him, and ask his assent, he should refuse it?"

"I should marry without it," answered Junot, very resolutely. "I am no longer a child; and in the most important transaction of my life I shall consult my own convenience only, without listening to the petty passions of others."—"You say that you are no longer a child, and you reason as if you were but six years old. Would you dissolve your connexion with your benefactor and friend, because it pleases you to make what he will call an imprudent marriage, that is to say, a marriage without fortune? For that is the reason he will give you, for you may easily suppose he will not tell you that it is because he does not like me. What will you do—what will you answer, when he gives you the option between my daughter and himself?"

"But he will never do so!" exclaimed Junot; "and if he could to such an extent forget my services and my attachment, I should always remain a faithful son of France, she will not repulse me; and I am a

general officer."—"And do you think us capable of accepting such a sacrifice?" said my mother.—"And though my daughter is but sixteen years old, can you have formed so unworthy an opinion of her as to suppose that she would thus abuse her power over you?"

"My dear General," said Albert, who had not yet uttered a word during this discussion, "I believe that all this will be easily arranged: but permit me to observe, in my turn, that you have been a little too hasty in this affair: nevertheless, I have no doubt that all will be right; for I do not think with my mother that the First Consul will interfere as a party, and still less, as a judge, in a question of such a nature as this."

Junot listened attentively; then looking at his watch, he suddenly took up his hat, and said to my mother, "I am going to the Tuileries. The First Consul is not yet in council. I will speak to him, and in an hour I shall return. He pressed Albert's hand, kissed my mother's, descended the staircase at two steps, jumped into his carriage, and cried out to the coachman, "To the Tuileries, at a gallop, only do not overturn us, because I have business there in a hurry."

"Where is the First Consul?" was his salutation to Duroc. "With Madame Bonaparte." "My friend, I must speak to him this very instant." "How you are agitated!" said Duroc, observing his flushed cheek and tremulous voice. "Is there alarming news?" "No, no; but I must see the First Consul; I must this instant; I will tell you by and by why I am so peremptory."

Duroc pressed his hand, and as he understood that he could oblige him, he lost no time in acquitting himself of his commission; and in a few moments Junot was introduced to the cabinet of the First Consul. "My General," said he, entering at once upon the subject, "you have testified a desire to see me married; the thing is settled—I am about to marry."—"Ah! ah! and you have run away with your wife? your air is perfectly wild."—"No, my General," replied Junot, endeavouring to calm his feelings for the crisis, for all my mother's objections started at once to his mind, and he felt fearful of a rebuff. "Whom are you going to marry, then?" said the First Consul, seeing that Junot did not speak. "A person whom you have known from her childhood, whom you used to love, my General, of whom every one speaks well, and with whom I am distractedly in love—Mademoiselle de Permon."

The First Consul, contrary to his custom, was not walking while he conversed, at the present moment. He was seated at his desk, which he was notching with his penknife. On hearing the name he leaped from his seat, threw away his penknife, and seized Junot by

the arm, asking, "Whom did you say you meant to marry?"—"The daughter of Madame de Permon, that child whom you have so often held upon your knee when you were yourself a young man, my General."—"That is not possible; Loulou is not marriageable; how old is she?"—"Sixteen years within a month."—"It is a very bad marriage you would make, there is no fortune; and besides, how can you determine to become the son-in-law of Madame de Permon? Do you not know that woman as she is? you must mind what you are about, she is a spirit. . . . . "—"Permit me to observe, General, that I do not propose to marry my mother-in-law; and moreover, I believe" —here he stopped short and smiled.—"Well, and what do you believe?"

"That the discussions which have arisen between yourself and Madame de Permon have blended a shade of prejudice with the judgment you have formed of her. What I know perfectly well is, that she is surrounded by numerous friends of long standing; and I have seen the love which her children bear her. Her daughter lavishes such care upon her, as only the heart of a devoted child is capable of; and has done so for two years past, to the injury of her own health. Her son"—"Ah, that is a brave youth!"

"Well, my General, and do you believe that he could be what he is to his mother, if Madame de Permon were not herself, not merely a good mother, but an excellent woman? Children are respectful and attentive to their mother, but to be to her what Mademoiselle Laurette and her brother are to Madame de Permon, she must deserve their respect. Nothing can give you an idea of their domestic virtues. Interrogate Madame Bonaparte, Madame Joseph, Madame Murat, these ladies will tell you how meritorious has been the conduct of Madame de Permon's children from the commencement of her severe illness." —"Is she so very ill, then?" inquired the First Consul with interest. —"Very ill; and the utmost care is necessary to her recovery, and to the relief of her sufferings."

The First Consul walked the room without speaking; he was serious, but not out of humour. At length he said, "But without fortune, I dare say; what portion has this young person?"—"I have not inquired."—"You were right in saying just now that you were distractedly in love. What extravagance! Did I not particularly recommend you to seek a rich wife? for you are not rich yourself."—"I beg your pardon, my General, I am very rich; are you not my protector, my father? and when I inform you that I love a young girl who is poor, but without whom I should be miserable, I know that you will come to my assistance, and portion my betrothed."

The First Consul smiled. "Oh, is that it? But how has this illness happened? Have you long been a visitor at Madame Permon's?"—"Eleven days, my General; but it is two months since my attention has been attracted towards her daughter. I have been spoken to about her, and one of our common friends even wished to promote this marriage; but Mademoiselle Laurette was then destined to another husband, and after all that I had heard of her, I would not visit the mother, lest I should fall in love with the daughter. In the interval the projected marriage was broken off. I went accordingly to pay my respects to Madame de Permon, and my resolution was soon taken. But now, my General, I am about to give you still further advantage over me—I have acted more madly than you can imagine:" Here he repeated the scene of the morning in its minutest details. The First Consul listened in silence, with great attention, and when Junot's narrative was ended, he replied:

"Though I recognise in all that you have just said the character of Madame de Permon, I cannot but approve her arguments as they respect me; and the sacrifice you have offered in the true spirit of a Paladin of the Crusades, could not be accepted either by her or Permon. You have, however, cut me off from the power of even remonstrating against this rash act, by the confidence you have just reposed in me; besides, you will not, as you say, marry your mother-in-law; and if the young person be really such as you describe, I see no reason for being severe on the article of fortune. I give you 100,000 francs for your bride's portion, and 40,000 for her wedding clothes. Adieu, my friend, I wish you happy!" So saying, he pressed Junot's hand warmly, and said, laughing, as he resumed his seat, "Oh, you will have a terrible mother-in-law!" then added with a more serious air, "but an amiable and worthy brother-in-law."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Junot's haste to conclude our marriage—Unwillingness to quit my mother—A family scene—Intrigues to lead Junot to another marriage—M. de Caulaincourt's confidential advice—My marriage fixed for the 20th of October—The marriage of Murat and Caroline Bonaparte—Her beauty—An error corrected—Murat's character—Causes of Napoleon's coolness towards him—Murat's boasting, and a breakfast of officers—The mistress of the punch and the betraying cipher—Bonaparte's project of marrying his sister to Moreau—Calumnies on Caroline Bonaparte—Murat's person and dress.

The preparations for my marriage were proceeding with activity; General Junot was extremely desirous that it should take place immediately; he had induced Madame Bonaparte the mother, and Madame Leclerc, to persuade my mother, and the 20th of October was the day already fixed upon, before I had been consulted upon the subject. It was on the 10th of that month that my mother proposed to me this speedy separation, to which no arguments she could use had any effect in reconciling me. M. de Caulaincourt, an old and faithful friend of the family, whom I had been in the habit of distinguishing by the affectionate epithet of little papa, was summoned to the conference. Seated between my brother and myself, beside my mother's sofa, he earnestly enforced my mother's plea of the impatience of my lover, and finding this insufficient, began to explain that to his knowledge Junot was at present the object of much intrigue at the Tuileries; that Madame Bonaparte, always apprehensive of the influence which early intimacy and a sentiment of gratitude for early favours might give my mother over the mind of the First Consul, had seen their mutual coldness with great complacency; had never attempted to widen the breach by irritation, judiciously considering that in such cases total oblivion is the most eligible result, and was now extremely disconcerted to find that Junot's marriage was likely to bring the family again into notice; to obviate this, she had attempted to produce a change in his views, and to direct them towards Mademoiselle Leclerc. To this, which was equally new to all his auditors, he added that delays are dangerous, that the First Consul might be induced by the influence of his wife to withdraw his consent; and that Junot himself

might be worked to her purpose. My mother's pride now began to take the alarm, and her kind friend was obliged to soothe it to the utmost: and finally the result of all this consultation was, that I gave my consent to fix the day for the 30th of October: sooner than this, I positively refused to quit my mother.

My own marriage has so much occupied my attention, that I have neglected to mention that of Madame Murat, which took place soon after the 8th of November. Caroline Bonaparte was a very pretty girl, fresh as a rose; not to be compared, for the regular beauty of her features, to Madame Leclerc, though more pleasing perhaps by the expression of her countenance and the brilliancy of her complexion, but by no means possessing the perfection of figure which distinguished her elder sister. Her head was disproportionably large, her bust was too short, her shoulders were too round, and her hips too thick; but her feet, her hands, and her arms, were models, and her skin resembled white satin seen through pink glass; her teeth were fine, as were those of all the Bonapartes; her hair was light, but no way remarkable. As a young girl, Caroline was charming; when her mother first brought her to Paris, in 1798, her beauty was in all its rosy freshness. I have never seen her appear to so much advantage since that time. Magnificence did not become her; brocade did not hang well upon her figure, and one feared to see her delicate complexion fade under the weight of diamonds and rubies.

In the "Mémoires Contemporaines" it is asserted, that when Murat demanded Mademoiselle Bonaparte in marriage, the First Consul made great difficulties in giving his consent. This is part of the plan now so generally adopted, of representing Napoleon and his family in an unfavourable light. But here, as usual, this disposition to accuse throws a veil over the truth. Bonaparte's repugnance is said to be founded on the ignoble birth of Murat. I can affirm with certainty that the author has been misinformed.

The true cause of Napoleon's little regard for Murat (for notwithstanding their alliance he never was attached to him) was Murat's imprudent conduct, when he came to Paris, to present the banners taken by the army of Italy, and after his return to head-quarters. Those who know the character of Napoleon as I know it, will easily understand that Murat would lose much ground in his General's favour, by whispering a boast of his credit with the Directory and the war ministry, through the means of Madame Bonaparte and Madame Tallien. I will here give an anecdote which occurred soon after he had rejoined his General, and which reached the ears of the latter on the very day. Junot was at that time wounded and in his bed, and

could not have been the informer upon a fact of which he was himself ignorant for some time.

Murat gave a breakfast to Lavalette, some other officers of the general staff, and many of his friends, chiefly young men belonging to the cavalry, whose company Murat preferred to an association with officers of his own rank; perhaps from that habit of boasting for which he afterwards became so remarkable, and to which he would find his inferiors more complaisant than his equals.

The breakfast had been very gay. Much champagne had been drunk, and there seemed no occasion for a supplement, but Murat proposed punch, adding that he would make it himself.

"You never drank better," said he to his companions; "I have learned to make it of a charming Créole, and if I could add all the circumstances of that education, you would like it still better." Then, ringing for his valet, he ordered not only all that was necessary for ordinary punch, but a number of accessories, such as tea, oranges instead of lemons, &c., and said aloud, "And be sure not to make a mistake; bring that Jamaica rum which was given me at Paris."

He went to his travelling-case and took from it a beautiful utensil of silver gilt, made purposely to extract the juice of lemons or oranges without squeezing them with the hand. He then proceeded in the whole affair in a method which proved that he had been under a good instructor. The punch was found excellent, so excellent that the bowl was emptied and filled again several times; confidence increased with each renewal; the guests wished to know how such good things were to be learned, and Murat, who perhaps was not quite clear-headed, replied, that the finest and prettiest woman in Paris had taught him this and many other things. Then, as may be supposed, questions multiplied; with the mirth and folly of childhood they desired to hear the whole history. It appears Murat could not resist, but related much that was unsuitable to the breakfast-table of a party of hussar officers. But the most unlucky part of the affair in its consequences was, that, without pronouncing any name, he indicated so plainly the personages concerned, that inductions were speedily drawn and commentaries followed. A breakfast, a dinner, and a supper, all in the same day, in the country, that is to say, the Champs Elysées, formed the principal facts of this boastful tale, and the finest woman in Paris, (the prettiest was not quite so clear,) all this told the name, and these young heads translated it with much more ease than at that moment they could have construed a verse of Virgil. Farther explanation was unnecessary; when one of the party, taking up the lemon-squeezer, discovered in his examination of it, that it had a cipher upon the han-

dle which was not that of Murat. "Ah!" exclaimed the madcap, "now for full information; here we may learn to read as well as to make punch;" and, brandishing the little utensil which Murat, who retained sense enough to see that this was going too far, wished to snatch from him, he looked again at the handle, and began, "Ba, be, bi, bo; Bo,—bon,—bona!" Murat at length succeeded in quieting him, and the breakfast finished, the chief of the guests forgot the particulars of the morning's entertainment. But two or three, who felt that they might speak without indiscretion, since nothing had been confided to them, repeated the whole history of the punch; on a theatre so fraught with wonders as Italy was at that moment, the tale made little impression generally, but all the circumstances of the bacchanalian scene reached the ears of the General. His jealous humour was awakened, and for a moment he proposed requiring an explanation from Murat, but reflection showed him how unwise such a proceeding would be, and he abandoned all thoughts of inquiring into the true circumstances of the case; whether they ever came to his knowledge, I know not.

The silver lemon-squeezer disappeared. Murat professed to regret its loss extremely, and reported that some of his giddy companions had thrown it out of the window in sport, and that it had never been recovered. He averred, also, that the young man who pretended to have read the cipher, had his eyes so dazzled by the fumes of the punch, that he had in fact mistaken M for B, and that the letter J stood for his own name (Joachim).

This little history was talked of for twenty-four hours, but offered only vague conjectures to those who were but imperfectly acquainted with the parties concerned, which was the case with almost all the guests except Lavalette and Duroc, who thought it not advisable to take further notice of it, and thought indeed, that the cypher might have been J. M. For my own part, I believe so too, but General Bonaparte, I have reason to think, was not so credulous; and the favour shown him on occasion of the expedition to Egypt, a favour which certainly his General had not solicited for him, seemed to confirm his impolitic boasting, and to indicate that his interest with the Directory was supported by a protector which could not please Napoleon. With respect to the fact itself, I apprehend that there was more of lightness in it on Murat's part than of reality. I have known the opinion of persons of the family respecting it, who perhaps saw things in their worst light, from being in a degree inimical to Josephine. They excused Murat on account of his youth, but were not so indulgent towards Madame Bonaparte.

Junot, whom the *Mémoiaes Contemporaines*, I know not why, make to interfere in the affairs of Murat and Napoleon, did not believe that the General had any cause for his jealousy of Murat, for jealous he certainly was; and it is the same with respect to another person of whom I shall have occasion to speak, and towards whom General Bonaparte's ill-will also took its rise in Italy.

When therefore Murat requested the hand of Caroline Bonaparte, the First Consul was very much disposed to refuse it him, but by no means on account of the obscurity of his birth. It is absurd to make him think and act in that manner at this epoch. Murat was in love with Mademoiselle Bonaparte; but in those days of our glory there were twenty young generals round Napoleon who were at least his equals, and whose fame was at that period even greater than his. The First Consul, on his return from Egypt, had a project for marrying his sister to Moreau: this may give the scale of qualification he required in his brother-in-law, much distinction from glory, and none from birth. I know also, for the First Consul has himself told me so, that he once had an idea of giving his sister to Augereau.* Caroline Bonaparte also was passionately in love with Murat. But this love did not take its rise from Joseph's embassy to Rome; Caroline was at that time, at the most, from eleven to twelve years of age. I do not even believe that Murat ever saw her at Rome. If this love really were anterior to his return from Egypt, it must be dated from their meeting at the Serbelloni Palace at Milan. At any rate I can assert, that nothing had occurred to render this marriage desirable to the Bonaparte family, as the *Mémoires Contemporaines* have said. Caroline Bonaparte married with a reputation as pure and as fresh as her complexion, and the roses of her cheeks. I hope I shall not be accused of partiality towards her; but I must be just and speak the truth. I can do so with the more certainty, as, at the epoch of her marriage, and during some preceding years, the connexion between us was very intimate.

With respect to Murat's beauty and the nobleness of his figure, it is a point which will bear discussion. I do not admit that a man is handsome because he is large, and always dressed for a carnival. Murat's features were not good, and I may even add that, considering him as detached from his curled hair, his plumes, and his embroidery, he was plain. There was something of the negro in his countenance, though his nose was not flat; but very thick lips, and a nose, which,

* I shall hereafter relate on what occasion this subject of conversation arose between the Emperor and myself in 1809.

though aquiline, had nothing of nobleness in its form, gave to his physiognomy a mongrel expression at least. I shall speak again of his person and of his talents, which deserve more circumstantial consideration; at present, I have to notice that he and Caroline were married soon after the 8th of November, and that at the period of my marriage, she was in the eighth month of her pregnancy with the Prince Achilles.

CHAPTER XL.

Satisfaction caused by my marriage in the Bonaparte family—Madame Bonaparte jealous of my mother—My mother's sufferings and preparations for my marriage—Details respecting the family of Junot—His elder brother in Egypt—Imperious will of Bonaparte—His refusal of a passport to Junot's brother—Junot's brother taken prisoner by the English—His return, and the melancholy death of his son—Remarkable circumstances attending the child's death—Its extraordinary attachment to its father—The event related to the First Consul—Conversation between Bonaparte and Corvisart upon the subject.

My marriage delighted Madame Bonaparte the mother; Lucien, Louis, and Joseph Bonaparte, Madame Leclerc, and Madame Bacciochi, rejoiced in the alliance from personal motives; they considered it a sort of victory gained over Madame Bonaparte. The latter, from the reasons of jealousy mentioned before, and which she had sense enough never to profess, though every one in the palace was satisfied that a tacit hostility existed between my mother and her, had laboured zealously to prevent it; and knowing that my mother was well aware of this, was herself the first person to speak to me of it, after my marriage. Her jealousy was, however, unfounded: at this period Napoleon was much attached to Josephine, and she might, if she pleased, have acquired a great influence over him; this she never possessed, as I shall have occasion to show.

The 30th of October approached, and our domicile, usually so peaceful though cheerful, and especially regular in the hours and manner of living, was now entirely transformed. My poor mother concealed her sufferings, and told me that she had never been better. She frequently went out to make purchases which she would trust to no one else, and which her taste certainly enabled her to choose better than any other person would have done, but which I should have

totally declined if I had believed them to have caused her the smallest pain. All that I could say on the subject would, however, have been wholly unavailing; and my brother and I had agreed that it was better not to contradict her. All therefore proceeded rapidly. The day when I was to quit my mother drew very near, and I may safely say, brilliant as was the situation it promised me, I saw its approach with terror.

Junot's family, to whom he was religiously attached, consisted of a father and mother, both in perfect health, and without any infirmity, the father at this time about sixty years of age, and the mother something older; an elder brother married, two uncles, and two sisters, both married; the younger to a landed proprietor named Maldan, and the elder, against the wishes of her parents, to a cousin-german; and, as generally happens with marriages not sanctioned by the parental blessing, this turned out ill—they had many children and were unhappy.

As soon as Junot's marriage was fixed he sent his brother into Burgundy to fetch his father and mother, and his wife. M. Junot, the elder brother, was not only a respectful son, an affectionate brother, a tender husband and father, but he was also a man of unimpeachable honour, and of the severest probity. Bonaparte, who knew his worth, was bent upon taking him on his expedition to Egypt; and when Junot obtained leave to visit his family, before he set out, he was expressly commanded to bring his brother back with him. Fraternal affection, and the great prospects held out to him, wrang from him an unwilling assent. He took leave of a beloved wife and an idolized infant, his only child, a boy two years and a half old, from whom he had yet scarcely been separated for an hour, and proceeded with his brother to Toulon. Here, however, he completely repented, and too late endeavoured to obtain his dismissal. Bonaparte had appointed him to a confidential situation on his civil staff, and had too much esteem for his probity to permit him to recede. In despair he embarked on board l'Orient—in despair he reached Egypt; and though he never neglected his duties, he never ceased importunately to demand his dismissal. But the General was not to be moved; and it was not till after the departure of Bonaparte himself, that my homesick brother-in-law obtained leave to return to Europe. But fresh troubles awaited him: the vessel in which he sailed was taken by the English, and, with the loss of all the property he had with him, he was, after an imprisonment of some months at Mahon, landed at length on the coast of France. Rejoicing in the thought of reposing at last under his own roof, he reached it to learn that the son he adored was no

more. The truly affecting manner of his darling's death was not made known to him till his wife had given birth to another child; but he never ceased to feel for this one a sentiment of greater tenderness than any of his other children inspired.

The cause of this infant's death, extraordinary as it may seem, was the ardour of his attachment to his father. He had bid him adieu, and had seen him depart; but when he found that he did not speedily return, his grief, at first moderate, became ungovernable: for some days he cried without cessation, perpetually inquiring where was his papa. At length his useless tears were intermitted, but his sighs, his pallid cheeks, and constant recurrence to the subject uppermost in his thoughts, showed that his grief was not abated. His mother, observing, with the acuteness peculiar to a mother's love, that the indefinite idea produced by the uniform answer to his question, that his father was gone away, only increased his distress, at last replied, that he was at Bussy, a small estate the family possessed a few miles from Dijon. "Then let us go to Bussy," said the infant, with the first expression of joy he had shown since his afflicting loss. The family made a rule of indulging all his wishes, and affording every diversion that could be supposed to alleviate his sorrow, and a journey to Bussy was undertaken; but the disappointment here experienced added to the malady which had now taken deep hold upon him; in turn, a removal to the houses of all his relations was tried, but in vain; at the end of a twelvemonth this extraordinary infant, who, at the time of his father's departure, was one of the finest, most healthy, and animated of children, expired with the dear name of papa still upon his lips.

The melancholy circumstances of this event were related to me a few weeks after my marriage; and it happened that some anecdotes of extraordinary children formed the subject of conversation at Malmaison one evening, about that time, and I related this interesting tale, then fresh in my mind. The First Consul, who usually did not enter at all into such subjects, paid great attention to what I was saying, and when I had done, asked me whether I had not abused my privilege of historian, and had not, of a very simple fact, created a romance, the hero of which was a child thirty months old.

"General Junot," I replied, "must be my guarantee, General, for the truth of what I have stated; and I can further assure you, that, far from having added to the affecting parts of my little history, I have curtailed them; and if you heard the same tale related by my worthy mother-in-law, who nursed the poor babe through the whole of its long agony, you would find mine very cold in comparison."

The First Consul walked to and fro, for some time, without saying a word. This is known to have been his habit when deep in thought. Suddenly he raised his head, and looking around him, asked for Corvisart, who soon appeared. "Corvisart," said the First Consul, "is it possible that a child should die of grief, in consequence of no longer seeing some one it loves, its nurse for example?" "I believe not," said Corvisart: "at the same time nothing is impossible; but nothing can be more rare than such a case, happily, or else what would become of us, we could not wean a child?"

The First Consul looked at me triumphantly, and said, "I was sure of it." To this I said, that I thought Dr. Corvisart had been unfairly interrogated, and that I begged permission to put the question to him in its true shape. I then, in a few words, repeated the history of my little nephew; and scarcely had he heard me out, than he exclaimed, that is quite another case; that a nurse was replaced by a governess, who lavished the same cares upon the child, and gave it food at the hours it had been accustomed to; but that affection distressed by absence, as that of my nephew had been, might cause death, and that the case was not even of very rare occurrence. "I have in my portfolios," said this very skilful man, "a multitude of notices relative to the affections of children; and if you should read them, General, you would find, not only that the germs of the passions exist in their young hearts, but that in some children these passions are developed in an alarming manner. Jealousy, as well as poison, will kill children of three years of age, and even younger." "You think, then, that this little Junot died of grief, from ceasing to see his father?" asked the First Consul.

"After what Madame Junot has just related, I cannot doubt it; and my conviction is confirmed by her having, without being aware of it, described all the symptoms of that malady of which only beings endowed with the most exquisite sensibility are susceptible. The child is happy in its early death, for he would have been to be pitied throughout his existence, and would have met with a perpetual succession of disappointments."

The First Consul rubbed his forehead frequently while Corvisart was speaking. It was evident that his repeated refusals to permit my brother-in-law's return to Europe were agitating his mind, and I am sure that, had the light been directed to his eyes, I should have seen them moist.

"Is Junot, your brother-in-law, still in Paris?" said he.—"Yes, General!"—"Will you tell him that I wish to see him? Is Junot acquainted with the nature of his nephew's death?"—"I believe not,

General; for my brother-in-law has himself only learnt it since his wife's accouchement."

He again passed his hand over his forehead, and shook his head with the air of a person who would drive away a painful thought: but he never permitted it to be supposed that he was long under the influence of any predominating emotion; he walked again the length of the room, and then placing himself directly in front of Corvisart, said to him with comic abruptness, "Corvisart, would it be better that there should be doctors, or that there should be none?" The modern Hippocrates replied to the malicious glance which accompanied the question, by one of equal meaning, then parried the attack with a jest, and added, "If you wish me to speak conscientiously, General, I believe that it would be as well if there were not any." We all laughed, when Corvisart continued and said, "But then there should be no *old women*."

CHAPTER XLI.

Thoughtless observation of my mother to Junot respecting nobility, and its prompt correction—Intrigues to break off Junot's marriage—Great number of emigrants in Paris—A young girl seeks Fouché—Affecting scene, and Fouché's sang-froid—Fouché compassionate!—The Marquis des Rosières and his daughter—The ancient Lieutenant of the King and *escapades* of Fouché—The net of government—The emigrants do justice to the glory of our arms—Junot's visit to my mother, and the news of the succeeding day—The Duke de Mouchy, M. de Montcalm, the Prince de Chalais, MM. de l'Aigle, and M. Archambeau de Perigord—Rudeness of the Marquis d'Hau——t—Text of a curious letter, addressed by Berthier to Junot from Madrid during an embassy—The passages omitted—Berthier, and the gift of tongues—Amusing adventure of Berthier at Milan—The tailor and the landlady.

The rapidity with which my marriage was pressed had this singularity in it, that those of our friends who were at this time in the country, or at watering-places, heard of it only when it was completed. To many of them it was unwelcome news; and some of our noble relatives reminded my mother, that though my father had been of plebeian origin she was not; and that she was wanting in respect to herself in bestowing her daughter upon an upstart General of the Revolution. My mother unadvisedly repeated these observations to General Junot, to whom it may be supposed they were not very acceptable: my mother, observing this, rectified the error with her

characteristic grace. "And why," she continued, "should this offend you? Do you think me capable of being affected by such opinions? Do you imagine that I regret having given you my child—having named you my son, and the brother of my Albert? No, my dear Junot," (and she cordially pressed his hand as she said it,) "we are now united for life and death!"

Junot has since told me that this explanation, given by my mother, had produced a very good effect on him. For some days past he had been disturbed by reports that my family were desirous of breaking off the match; and that another, more eligible, having offered, my disinclination towards him would be made the pretence for dismissing him. Another marriage was also strongly pressed upon him, but Junot was too much engaged in honour and in heart to recede: and these attempts had no result, unless it were that of impressing me with a slight degree of hostility against a personage who had thus intrigued to exclude me from a society in which I was entitled, from various reasons, to hold a leading rank.

The emigrants were now returning in crowds: La Vendée was settling peaceably; many persons connected with the nobility were repairing to Paris as a more secure asylum than the provinces. Fouché, the minister of police, on whom their fate so much depended, was wicked only in circumstances which had immediate reference to himself; otherwise he was capable of good actions, of which the following is an example. In the month of September of the year 1800, Fouché was frequently told that a young woman, indifferently dressed but very pretty, asked a private audience of him, but without claiming any acquaintance with him, or making use of any name to obtain an introduction, while she persisted in refusing to state her own name or residence. Fouché, who at this time had too many affairs of importance upon his hands to be able to spare any attention to one which offered only an appearance of gallantry, took no notice of this. The young girl, however, continued to besiege his door notwithstanding the insults of the domestics, always so plentifully lavished upon misfortune, till at length the first valet, taking pity upon her, approached and inquired, why she did not write to the citizen minister? "You might," said he, "by that means obtain an audience, which, I believe, is what you want, is it not?"

The young person said it was, but that her name was unknown to the minister, who would therefore probably refuse her request. The poor child wept as she pronounced the last words: the valet looked at her, and pondered. Whether his thoughts were what they should be, I do not pretend to say, but his resolution was quickly taken.

He looked at his watch, and found that it was not yet eleven o'clock, and that, consequently, his master would not have finished his breakfast. "Wait a few minutes," said he to the young girl; "but tell me, do you live far off?"—"Yes; very, very far!" The valet, who was now examining her faded black dress, said to himself, "But how the devil am I to take her in, equipped in that fashion?" His eyes, raised to inspect her bonnet, at that moment fell upon a most lovely countenance, and he added: "Bah! I should be very absurd to trouble myself about her dress: wait for me, my child."

"Citizen minister," said he, as he entered the private cabinet where his master was breakfasting, and at the same time pursuing his business: "there is without a young girl, who, for this month past, has come daily to speak to you; she weeps, and pretends that her business concerns life and death: she seems very much distressed. Shall I bring her in?"—"Hum!" said Fouché; "another of the intrigues of those women who solicit the pardon of their brothers and cousins, without ever having had either father or mother. How old is this one?"—"About eighteen, citizen minister."

"It is as I guess, then. And thou, honest fellow, hast taken charge of her introduction? But I am armed at all points. Bring the nymph in, and let her look to it if she have not her patent."*

The valet introduced his protégée. On seeing her, Fouché betrayed a movement of surprise, the effect which her really distinguished manner, compared with her worn-out apparel, made on him. A sign from the minister sent away the valet. "What do you want with me, my dear child?" said he to his young visitor. She threw herself on her knees before him, and joining her hands, "I am come," said she sobbing, "to beg the life of my father." Fouché started as if a serpent had crossed his path, in hearing a petition for human life proceed from such lips. "And who is your father?" said he, "what is his name?"—"Ah! you will kill him!" she cried, in a voice trembling with terror, as she perceived Fouché's sallow complexion take a still more livid tint, and his white lips contract; "you will kill him!"—"Peace! simpleton as you are. Stand up, and tell me the name of your father. How came he to be in Paris, if he be in fear for his life?"

The young lady then related their history: it was short and affect-

* Fouché, who, as all the world knows, was a moral man, one day had all the female frequenters of the Palais Royal and such like haunts taken up, that he might compel them to take out a patent. He chose to have order even in disorder.

ing. Her father, the Marquis des Rosières, after having been several times made prisoner in La Vendée, was taken at last with arms in his hands, and had escaped by a miracle; but closely pursued, almost tracked, he had at length arrived at Paris as the safest place of refuge. His daughter was to have rejoined him, with her mother, and a young sister about twelve years of age. "But," continued she, "I lost my mother and sister, and arrived here alone."—"How then did they die so suddenly?" asked Fouché. "The Blues killed them," said she in a low voice, casting down her eyes; for she feared Fouché would impute it to her as a crime to denounce that of the republican soldiers.

"Where do you lodge?" said the minister, after a moment's silence. Mademoiselle des Rosières appeared to hesitate. "Very well," said Fouché stamping his foot, "you will not tell me where you live? If you do not tell me with a good grace, my people will know where to find you two hours hence, or sooner." Incapable of resistance, Mademoiselle des Rosières again fell upon her knees, extending her hands to him. "Come, be quiet, let us have no tragedy —I do not like it; only tell me if I may depend upon your father. If I obtain his pardon, can I depend upon him?"

The expression of Mademoiselle des Rosières's countenance at this moment required no interpreter. "You are a silly child," said Fouché, with an accent of dissatisfaction, "when I wished to know if I might depend upon your father, it was in the name of the First Consul. Did you suppose I wanted to make him a police spy?" He wrote the address of Mademoiselle des Rosières on a card, and before she left the room asked her, why she applied to him, rather than to the First Consul? "By my father's desire," she answered; "he thought you would have known his name." The minister was instantly struck with a remembrance which had escaped him; but he still doubted. "Tell your father to write me word this very day, whether he were not a lieutenant of the King before the Revolution." M. des Rosières's answer was in the affirmative. He had been the King's lieutenant in Brittany and in Burgundy, or rather in Franche-Comté, and in this capacity had had the good fortune to be very useful to the young Abbé Fouché. In a question of town-walls escaladed, the doors of a seminary forced; in fine, of very grave matters, the lieutenant of the King, like the good Samaritan, had enveloped the whole in the mantle of charity. I know not precisely the extent of the obligation he had conferred, but this I know, that the day succeeding his daughter's interview with the minister M. des Rosières received a safe conduct, and a short time afterwards a free

pardon, with a good place as commandant of a town in Alsace. There his daughter established herself with him in the winter of 1801. She married there, and now inhabits her château of Reisberg, some leagues from Colmar. One remarkable circumstance, was, that the valet de chambre was discharged. For what reason?

This adventure may give occasion to many observations. I have inserted it here, first, because, in point of time, this is its proper place; and secondly, because I shall have frequent occasion to speak of the principal actor in this little scene; and I am not sorry to have a point of comparison to offer. Fouché, again, is one of those great figures in our political drama who is supposed to be well represented by the painting of a single trait. But what different shades, what diverse attitudes must be studied to complete the portrait! I knew him well; for finding myself often brought into contact with him, I have watched him with a minute attention, which I believe would not have suited him had he been aware of it; but the result is, that my observations upon him are numerous and important.

Fouché has been much spoken of; and certainly much may be said of him. The epochs of his life, which are preserved in the Moniteur and in all the biographies, are frequently recalled. I shall speak of him, not differently, but with more development. I shall show him often acting in concert with one of the first actors on our great theatre; and some actions of both may be illustrated by the light which I shall throw upon them. These same actions formed in great measure the net of government* in which Napoleon enveloped us. He was too skilful not to be aware of the consequences; but organizing upon ruins and with ruins, in order to arrive at his object, which was a strong and compact government with a free and rapid circulation, it was necessary to employ the instruments which he found in the workshop of which he had taken possession; but Napoleon was a giant, and all in his hands struck with the force of a club; it was therefore the more essential that he should himself watch over their employment and direction. Among those who surrounded him on his return from Egypt, and on the 18th Brumaire, there are but few that I shall place in my historical picture to be judged by their loyally patriotic labours; Carnot, Thibaudeau, Dejean, Boissy-d'Anglas, Berlier, and some others, and the catalogue is full.

Meanwhile the year 1800 was drawing to a close, and every month, every week, brought news of fresh victories gained by Moreau, who in a few days acquired an immortality, if he had known how to pre-

* "*Le reseau gouvernant*," a favourite phrase of Napoleon.

serve it. He forced Austria, still trembling with the shame of Marengo, to come to confession at Luneville. Of all the insults and humiliations we had suffered under the campaigns of Schérer, and the victories of Suwarroff, we were now about to be revenged! Every evening General Junot brought news which made my heart and that of Albert beat. It was curious to observe the different impressions made upon different individuals; but this justice I must render to all, that never, either by word or gesture, was the smallest regret expressed on occasion of a victory obtained by our troops; and I may say, that at this epoch the first names of France were happy and proud to march under the shadow of our laurels, though some of them, while triumphing in the glory of their country, were not the less faithful to their original allegiance. I shall not make exceptions; France has always been rich in similar examples; I shall only name the Duke de Mouchy, M. de Montcalm, the Prince de Chalais, the MM. de l'Aigle, M. Archambaud de Perigord, as persons belonging to my mother's society, and because the recollection of association with persons upright and constant in their opinions is pleasing to the mind.

Junot, who was not prodigal in his esteem and attachment, accorded both to the persons I have named, and when he met them at my mother's house he was not prevented by their presence from reading his news; he was sure that the good fortune of France would be welcome to them. It was not so with the Marquis d'Hau—t; he was by disposition contradictory and quarrelsome; and though he possessed talents, his constant unreasonable disputations rendered him unendurable as a companion.

One evening Junot (it was before he had offered me his hand) had been dining with Carnot, then minister of war, and having learned news which he presumed would be agreeable to us, came to my mother's with proofs of some of the morrow's journals, and private letters which he had himself received. One of these, from Berthier, whom the First Consul had sent into Spain, contained some very interesting details. Madame Visconti, who had dined with us, had learned this, and was very impatient to see the letter. Before he read it, Junot was remarking upon the smiling and happy aspect of affairs, while only a few months previous, France had been a scene of mourning. He described Italy restored to our authority, Russia desiring our alliance, England renouncing the title of King of France, to facilitate her negotiations with the consular government, Austria beaten at all points, and—"Hold there!" interrupted M. d'Hau—t rudely, "that is no cause for boasting. General Moreau has done that."

Junot was so much astonished, not only at the interruption, but at the manner of it, that at first he turned towards M. d'Hau—t, and fixed his eyes upon him without speaking, but soon after observed with a marked emphasis:

"I thought, till this moment, that General Moreau was a Breton; and I thought further, that since the marriage of Anne of Brittany with two of our kings, Brittany was become a province of France; and from all this I came to the conclusion that General Moreau was a Frenchman."

"Oh! let us leave these querulous discussions, my dear friend," said Madame Visconti, in a wheedling tone, "for I am longing to hear Berthier's letter."—"You are right," said Junot, and he read to us the following, which he drew from his pocket:

"St. Ildefonso, 28 Fructidor, year IX.

"You will have learnt by the journals, my dear Junot, that I reached Madrid on the evening of the 2d September. Duroc will also have communicated to you the letter which I wrote to him, and in which I described the fatigue I had undergone from the heat and the dust, particularly in the neighbourhood of Madrid. Imagine yourself at Tentoura or at Cesarea,—the same misery. In all respects I find great resemblance between the two countries; only that Egypt has the advantage.

"On arriving at Madrid, I found that the whole town had deferred their bed-time to come and meet me; the street of Alcala was illuminated with large torches of wax which had a very good effect. The crowd was so great, that my carriage could not proceed. On reaching the hotel appointed for my residence, I alighted from my carriage to the sound of military music, really very fine. Alquier had ordered me an excellent supper, of which I assure you that I did not fail to profit; and I slept as if I were but twenty years old. Tell this to some one of my acquaintance.

"I have therefore slept equally well on mattresses of white satin as on an iron bedstead. The morning after my arrival I quitted Madrid, to join the King and Queen of Spain here. In traversing Madrid I was so warmly applauded, for that is the only suitable word, that the tears started to my eyes; I thought at once of my much-beloved General, to whom these applauses were addressed. But all this was nothing compared to the reception I met with from their Catholic Majesties. The King embraced me, and the Queen, who is very handsome, gave me her hand to kiss, and then embraced me also. But that which passes all belief is, the excessive attachment

which their Majesties express for the Republic, and especially for our much-beloved Consul.* His reputation has crossed the Pyrenees, and is come to make friends for him in the heart of Spain. All goes well. I hope to terminate the commission with which I am charged as I have usually done, and merit his approbation. The Queen of Spain has spoken much to me of a certain person of my acquaintance, whose reputation for beauty, like the renown of the First Consul, has stepped over the boundaries of France. Ah, my dear Junot! how do I long to be again amongst you all! I do not like Spain. Try if the First Consul cannot be induced to replace me by Duroc, or Bourrienne. Why I name the latter, I cannot rightly say. Adieu, my dear Junot! You ask me for details; I hope those I have sent you are sufficiently interesting. How I long to be in the midst of you! I beg you to tell the Signora *Pepita* (that is what I shall call her here) that I have not forgotten her commissions; she might be well assured of that; I wrote to her by the last courier I sent; but I am always happy to repeat that I am her slave, and perhaps she will more readily believe it when the lips of a friend repeat it for me. Read her this part of my letter. *Cara, cara Pepita.* You see that I improve.

"Adieu, my dear Junot; adieu, my dear friend. Pray tell the First Consul that you know I am ill, and that he should not leave me long here. I know that my mission is but temporary, but I tremble to think of the possibility of only remaining here three months. They write to me from Paris that I am spoken of for the war ministry.† I know nothing of it.

"Adieu, my friend.

"Salutation and friendship.

"ALEXANDER BERTHIER."

I ought to notice, before proceeding further, two things of small importance, which are connected with this letter. The first is, that it was some time afterwards that I became acquainted with the whole of it. General Junot did not think it necessary to read to us Berthier's expressions of love, thrown into the midst of a serious epistle, otherwise filled with matters of importance to the country, and which gave him the attitude of a true Cassandra. There was something absurd in this ambassador of a great nation, forty-five years of age, soliciting a young man of twenty-seven to associate with him in a

* This is not the only letter which Junot received from Berthier, in which his attachment to the First Consul is similarly testified.

† He was already named to it.

falsehood to procure his return a few weeks sooner to the side of his mistress; and Junot would not allow M. de Hau—t the gratification of remarking upon it. The second thing was explained with much less difficulty. He told us that Berthier had never in his life been able to learn a single word of a foreign language. "And to such an extent was this eccentricity carried," said Junot, "that in Egypt it was not possible to make him say the word Para. He learnt it, but as soon as it became necessary to place it in a phrase, it was gone. Being once at Milan, and in immediate want of a tailor, he ordered his servant to fetch him one. The valet, not understanding a single word of Italian, represented to his master that he should lose himself in the town, and that it was necessary to wait for the servant of the house. Berthier was impatient and very peremptory, particularly when in immediate want of any thing he ordered. "You are a blockhead," said he to the valet; "order the mistress of the house to come up." He brought up the landlady, leading her by the sleeve, for she did not, or would not, understand a word of French.

"Madame," said Berthier, stammering, as he always did when he intended to make an impression, which did not help him at all; "Madame, I wish for a tailor." The landlady looked at him without answering. "Madame," said Berthier, raising his voice to its highest pitch, that she might understand him the better, "I want a tailor!" The woman looked at him in silence, but smiled and shook her head in token of not understanding.

"Parbleu!" said Berthier; "this is rather too much! what, you do not know what a tailor is?" Then, taking the skirt of his own coat and that of his servant, he shook first one and then the other, crying still louder and louder, "A tailor! I say, a tailor!"

The lady, who smiled at first, now began to laugh; and after a while, beginning to think that her lodger was mad, called out to her servants as loud as she could, saying, "*Ma è matto questo benedetto generale! per il casso di san Pasquale è matto.*"

Two waiters ran up at the furious noise made by Berthier, their mistress, and the valet; and they only increased the confusion. "I went just at this moment," continued Junot, who related this story, "to visit Berthier, and from the foot of the staircase heard a noise sufficient to stun one; I could not understand what should cause such a tumult in his apartment, and I hurried up stairs, thinking a friendly fist might be useful. I found him with a face as red as fire, and eyes starting from their sockets, marching up and down the room, vehemently exclaiming: "A tailor, a tailor! It is to provoke me that they will not fetch one; they can hear very well." To make himself better

understood he had taken off his coat, and was shaking it like a madman. When I went in, he threw it upon the ground, and advancing to the landlady, took her by the arms and pulled her before him, saying, "Stand there! old sibyl;" then shaking his two hands, which were by no means handsome, he said to her: "What! you do not know what a tailor is?" then imitating with his short thick fingers the action of a pair of scissors, he cried out in a tone of despair, "a tailor, I say; *tailleur! tailleur! taillum! taillarum!*"

The sight of Junot overjoyed him. An explanation ensued, and when Berthier heard the word *sartore*, which he ought to have used, "Pardieu!" said he, putting on his coat, and wiping his forehead, "it was well worth the trouble of making me cry out like that! I asked them for a tailor. Well! *tailleur*, *sartore:* it means the same thing after all; and besides, I showed them my coat."*

CHAPTER XLII.

Madame Bernard's daily bouquet—Junot accused of being a conspirator—His inexplicable absence—Lucien Bonaparte and the Abbé Rose—A new opera—Discussions upon it—Les Horaces—Mysterious entreaties of Junot to dissuade us from going to the Opera—Half-confidence of Junot to my brother—Evening at the Opera—Enthusiasm caused by the presence of Bonaparte—The First Consul, my mother, and the opera-glass—Lainez, Laforest, and Mademoiselle Maillaret—Junot frequently called away; his mind engaged—The Adjutant Laborde—The gaiety of Junot, and the composure of the First Consul—The conspiracy of Ceracchi and Aréna—Quitting the Opera; the First Consul saved—The brothers Aréna—Nocturnal conversation at my mother's.

The preparations for my marriage were in active progress during the month of October. Junot looked in upon us every morning, and then came to dinner, having his coach or his cabriolet always filled with drawings, songs, and a heap of trifles from the *Magazine of Sykes*, or the Petit Dunkerque, for my mother and me; and never forgetting the bouquet, which, from the day of our engagement to that of our marriage, he never once failed to present me. It was Madame Bernard, the famous *bouquetière* to the Opera, who arranged these nose-

* At this time Milan was far from being what it has since become, and there was nothing remarkable in finding an inn where no one could speak French.

gays with such admirable art; she has had successors, it is true, but the honour of first introducing them is all her own.

One day Junot appeared uneasy, agitated, having been called away from the dining-table. It was then Madame de Contades, seeing him very silent, said jestingly, "General, you are as serious as a conspirator!" Junot coloured. "Oh!" she continued, "I know that you have nothing to do with conspiracies, or at least that yours would be only directed against us poor emigrants, returned and ruined as we are; and really you would have more than fair play!"

"I believe," said I, "there is little danger in conspiracies; it is rare that their motives are perfectly pure, and the interest of the country, always the pretence, is generally the last thing intended; and therefore it happens that almost all great conspiracies are discovered before they take effect. The real danger to the chief of a state arises from a fanatic such as Jacques Clement; an insane ascetic, such as Ravaillac or Jean Chattel; or a hand conducted by desperation, like that of Charlotte Corday; those are the blows which cannot be warded off. What barrier can be opposed to them? What guards can prevent my reaching the most powerful throne upon earth to hurl its master to the grave, if I am willing to give blood for blood, life for life?"

Every one exclaimed against me. "Come," said my mother, "away with these Grecian and Roman notions." I kissed her hand and smiled; a glance towards General Junot had found his eyes fixed upon me with an expression so singular, that an idea crossed my mind that he would not be very solicitous for an union with so resolute a woman, who seemed willing to play with poniards as with her fan. The thought seemed even to myself burlesque, because it was far from the truth, and at that period of my life I was one of the greatest poltroons of my sex. I was seated at the foot of my mother's sofa, and leaning towards her, whispered to her in Italian the thought which had just struck me. My mother laughed as well as myself, and we both looked towards General Junot, supposing that he would understand us, and approach to partake of our gaiety. He came indeed, but instead of replying to our jests, he fixed on me a look of anxious expression, and taking my hand and my mother's pressed them both. While leaning over us he said to me, "Promise me not to speak again upon this subject: say you will not?"—"Undoubtedly, I will not; but why?"—"I will tell you by and by; at least I hope so," he added, with a singular smile. Lucien Bonaparte, who came in at that moment, would know to what our conference related; for the other interlocutors continued the discussion, and the conspiracies were

still as much alive as if we had been in the prætorian halls. "Bah!" said Lucien, "these subjects of conversation are not suited for women, and I wonder that these gentlemen have suffered them to proceed so long. It would be much better to talk of the opera I am to give you the day after to-morrow."

Albert, M. Hippolyte de Rastignac, and the Abbé Rose, arrived at this moment from the general rehearsal. One was much pleased with the opera, another did not like it at all. Albert and the Abbé, both good authorities, differed totally in opinion; music and the opera underwent a long and critical discussion, Lucien and Junot meanwhile betaking themselves to private conversation. I remarked that they never raised their voices, and that the subject which occupied them seemed to be serious and important. The expression of their countenances made me uncomfortable, though I knew of nothing actually alarming. Every thing appeared sombre and mysterious around us. It was evident that great uneasiness agitated the persons who were attached to the First Consul. I dared not ask a question. Lucien looked upon me as a child; and nothing could induce me to interrogate General Junot. Joseph, who was goodness itself, was the only person to whom I could have summoned courage to speak upon such a subject; but he was about to set out for Luneville, and we scarcely saw him again.

On the 11th of October Junot came early in the morning, which was not usual. He was still more serious than the day of the conversation upon conspiracies. We were to go this evening to the first representation of *Les Horaces* of Porta and Guillard. Guillard was the intimate friend of Brunetière, who interested himself much in its success, and had begged as a favour that he would attend it. This party was then arranged, and I confess much to my satisfaction. My mother was better, and I looked forward to the evening as a great treat. It was then with no very pleasant emotion that I heard Junot ask my mother not to go to the Opera. His reasons for making this request were the most singular. The weather was bad, the music was bad, the poem was good for nothing; in fine, the best thing we could do was to stay at home. My mother, who had prepared her toilet for all the magnificence of a first representation, and who would not have missed it had it been necessary to pass through a tempest, and listen to the dullest of poems, would not attend to any of Junot's objections; and I was delighted, for I placed full confidence in the Abbé Rose, who said that the music was charming. The General, however, still insisted; so much obstinacy at length made an impression upon my mother, who, taking the General's arm, said to him anxiously,

"Junot, why this perseverance?—is there any danger?—why are you afraid?"

"No, no," exclaimed Junot; "I am afraid of nothing but the ennui you will experience, and the effect of the bad weather. Go to the Opera. But," continued he, "if you decide upon going, permit me to beg you not to occupy the box you have hired, but to accept of mine for the night."

"I have already told you, my dear General, that it is impossible. It would be contrary to all established customs, and I am particular in supporting them. Would you have my daughter, your betrothed bride, but not yet your wife, appear in a box which all Paris knows to be yours? But for what reason am I to give up mine?" "Because it is at the side, which is a bad situation for the opera; and it is, besides, so near to the orchestra, that Mademoiselle Laurette's delicate ear will be so offended, she will not, for the next fortnight, be able to perform herself."

"Come, come," said my mother, "there is not common sense in all this. We will go and hear this second Cimarosa, who, no doubt, will not equal his prototype; but at all times a first representation is a fine thing. Do you dine with us?"—"I cannot," answered the General: "I cannot even come to offer you my arm, but I shall certainly have the honour of seeing you at the Opera."

On quitting my mother, the General went up to Albert's apartment, and found him in his study, surrounded by those peaceful labours which so usefully divided his time. He earnestly recommended him not to lose sight of my mother and myself throughout the evening. "I have endeavoured," said he, "to persuade your mother not to go out this evening, and especially against going to the Opera, but without any effect. There may be trouble there, though there is no actual danger to fear; but I confess I should be better pleased if persons in whom I am interested were at home, rather than at the Opera. Your prudence, my dear Albert, guarantees your silence; you understand my situation;" and he left him, promising an explanation of what he had just said the next morning, if not that very night.

My brother came down to my mother, and the thoughtfulness of his air struck us immediately. "Ah!" said my mother, "what means all this? Junot would prevent our going to the Opera; and here is another preparing to accompany us there, as if he were going to a funeral. It is worth while, certainly, to lay plans for gaiety if they are to be executed in such solemnity." My brother could not help laughing at this petulant sally, and this restored my mother's good

humour. We dined earlier than usual, and took our seats at the Opera at eight o'clock.

The boxes were already filled. The ladies were all elegantly dressed. The First Consul had not yet taken his place. His box was on the first tier to the left, between the columns which separate the centre from the side boxes. My mother remarked, that the eyes of all persons in the pit, and nearly of all the boxes, were directed towards it. "And," said Albert, "observe also the expression of affection in the audience."

"Bah!" said my mother; "though I am near-sighted, I can see very well that it is but curiosity. We are always the same people. Lately, at that fête of the Champ-de-Mars, when the Abbé Sieyes (she never used any other denomination) wore feathers like the canopy of the Holy Sacrament under which he formerly carried the Host, did not every one, and myself amongst the first, strain our necks to obtain a better sight of him? And the chief of the *band of sharpers*, was not he also the point of attraction for all eyes in the day of his power? Well, this man is now master in his turn, and he is gazed at as the others have been before him."

My brother persisted in saying that the First Consul was loved, and that the others had only been feared. I was quite of his opinion: and my mother only replied by shrugging her shoulders. At this moment the door of the First Consul's box opened, and he appeared with Duroc, Colonel Savary, and, I think, Colonel Lemarrois. Scarcely was he perceived, when, from all parts of the theatre, arose simultaneously plaudits so unanimous, that they appeared to constitute but one and the same sound. The stage was thought of no more; all heads were turned towards General Bonaparte, and a stifled hurrah accompanied the clapping of hands and stamping of feet. He saluted the audience with much smiling grace; and it is well known that the least smile enlivened his naturally stern countenance, and imparted a striking charm to it. The applauses continuing, he inclined his head two or three times, without rising, but still smiling. My mother observed him through her glass, and did not lose one of his movements. It was the first time she had seen him since the great events of Brumaire; and he so entirely occupied her attention, that General Junot came into the box without her perceiving him. "Well! do you find him changed since you saw him last?" said he.

My mother turned hastily round, and was as much embarrassed as a young girl who should be asked why she looked out of the window when the person who most interested her was passing. We all laughed, and she joined us. Meanwhile, the orchestra had recom-

menced its harmonious clamour, giving the diapason to Laforet and Lainez, who both screamed in emulation who should be best, or rather who should be worst; and Mademoiselle Maillard chimed in with lungs worthy a Roman lady of ancient times, making us regret that Madame Chevallier no longer occupied the scene. My mother, whose Italian ear could not support such discord, often turned towards General Junot, to speak of the enchanting songs of Italy, so soft and so sweet. At one of these moments the General slightly touched her arm, and made her a sign to look to the First Consul's box. General Bonaparte had his glass directed towards us, and as soon as he perceived that my mother saw him, he made two or three inclinations in the form of a salutation: my mother returned the attention by one movement of her head, which was probably not very profound, for the First Consul, as will be shortly seen, complained to my mother herself of her coldness towards him this night. Junot would also have reproached her at the instant, had not one of the officers of the garrison of Paris tapped at the door of the box to request him to come out. It was an adjutant named Laborde, the most cunning and crafty of men. I shall sometimes have occasion to speak of him, and his portrait may take its place very well amongst those whom we cannot do without. His figure and his manner were at this moment indescribable. Albert, who now saw him for the first time, wished for a pencil to make a sketch of him.

General Junot was absent but a few moments. When he returned to the box, his countenance, which all day had been serious and even melancholy, had resumed in a moment its gaiety and openness, relieved of all the clouds which had veiled it. He leaned towards my mother, and said, very low, not to be heard in the next box, "Look at the First Consul; remark him well."—"Why would you have me fix my eyes on him?" said my mother; "it would be ridiculous."

"No, no, it is quite natural. Look at him with your glass; then I will ask the same favour from Mademoiselle Laurette."—I took the opera-glass from my brother, and looked at him in my turn.—"Well," said the General, "what do you observe?"—"Truly," I replied, "I have seen an admirable countenance; for I can conceive nothing superior to the strength in repose, and greatness in quiescence, which it indicates."—"You will find its expression, then, calm and tranquil?"—"Perfectly. But why do you ask that question?" said I, much astonished at the tone of emotion with which the General had put this question.

He had not time to answer. One of his aides-de-camp came to the little window of the box to call him. This time he was absent

longer; and on his return wore an air of joy; his eyes were directed towards the box of the First Consul, with an expression which I could not understand. The First Consul was buttoning the gray coat which he wore over the uniform of the Guards, and was preparing to leave the box. As soon as this was perceived the acclamations were renewed as vehemently as on his entrance. At this moment, Junot, no longer able to conquer his emotion, leaned upon the back of my chair, and burst into tears. "Calm yourself," said I, leaning towards him to conceal him from my mother, who would certainly have exercised her wit upon the subject: "calm yourself, I entreat you. How can a sentiment altogether joyful produce such an effect upon you?"

"Ah!" replied Junot, quite low, but with an expression I shall never forget, "he has so narrowly escaped death! the assassins are at this moment arrested."

I was about to exclaim, but Junot silenced me. "Say nothing, you will be overheard. Let us hasten out," said he. He was so much agitated that he gave me my mother's shawl, and her mine; then taking my arm, made me hastily descend the staircase which led to a private door opening upon the Rue de Louvois, reserved for the authorities and the diplomatic body. My mother, conducted by my brother, rejoined us at the glass door, and jestingly asked the General if he meant to carry me off. Junot, though cheerful, still had his mind too much fixed on important subjects to reply to her raillery; my thoughts were wholly engaged by the few words he had said in the box, and the silence and haste imposed upon me, alarmed and seriously affected me. Junot observed my paleness, and fearing that I should be taken ill, ran into the street, though it rained in torrents, without listening to my mother, to find our carriages and servants. He met with his own first; my mother did not perceive it till she was already on the step, but immediately made an effort to withdraw. Junot, reminding her of the rain and her health, almost compelled her to get in; then whispering to me, "All is right, for heaven's sake compose yourself, and say nothing!" called to his coachman, "Rue St. Croix;" then taking Albert's arm, they went together to seek my mother's carriage, in which they followed, or rather preceded us; for we found them at home on our arrival.

My mother was, throughout her life, a sort of worshipper of etiquette, and of the usages which should form the code of elegance and good breeding. If she ever failed in them herself, it was from an excessive vivacity which she could not always command; not from ignorance of what was correct, or any intention of neglecting it. Notwithstanding her acute and amiable disposition, she affixed an extreme

importance to these trifles; more so than can be conceived, without taking into consideration the education she had received, and the seal of indelible prejudice which the circumstances of the times had impressed upon them. And if I may be allowed to say so, without being accused of speaking too partially of a mother whom I adored, I would add, that the requisitions she imposed on those who surrounded her of attention to trifles, which in our days would perhaps be called puerilities, only increased her claims upon our respect and affection.

No sooner were we alone and in the carriage, than she began to dilate upon the dissatisfaction Junot had caused her.

"What is the use of these parties of pleasure, and in gala costume too? Who would ever have believed that I should give my arm to an officer in uniform to leave the Opera? It is too ridiculous. I will tell him not to go to the Opera again in uniform. He will understand the propriety of it; he has sense, and a good and correct taste. And then, to leave us hanging upon Albert's two arms, making him resemble a pitcher with two handles! Who ever saw a man of fashion give his arm to two women at once? It is very well for Sykes's first clerk to gallant the wife and daughter of his master to the theatre in that manner. But a more serious fault which I have to reproach him with is putting me into his carriage. It is to be hoped no one of distinction was near; did you observe whether any of our acquaintances were in the corridor?" I had seen several persons whom I knew just before I got into the carriage, but I should have been very unwilling to increase her displeasure by telling her so; I had not time, however, to answer before we stopped at our own door, and Albert and Junot, already arrived, received us there. Junot led my mother to her apartment, placed her on her sofa, surrounded her by those thousand and one little things which are necessary to the comfort of an invalid; then seating himself upon a stool at her feet, and taking her hands in his, assumed a tone suitable to the important event he was about to relate. He informed her that Ceracchi and Aréna, the one actuated by republican fanaticism, the other by vengeance, had taken measures to assassinate Bonaparte. As General Junot proceeded in his account his voice became stronger, his language more emphatic; every word was a thought, and every thought came from his heart. In painting Bonaparte such as he saw him daily, such, in fact, as he was at that time, his masculine and sonorous voice assumed a tone of sweetness; it was melody; but when he proceeded to speak of those men who, to satisfy their vengeance, or their senseless wishes, would assassinate him who was at that moment charged with the futurity of France, his voice failed, broken by sobs, and leaning his head upon my mother's pillow,

he wept like a child; then, as if ashamed of his weakness, he went to seat himself in the most obscure corner of the room.

My mother's heart was formed to understand such a heart as Junot's; and open as she was to all the tender emotions, she was violently agitated by the state in which she saw him. In her turn she burst into tears. "How you love him!" said she.

"How I love him!" answered he, firmly joining his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven: "Yes, I love him! Judge," continued he, rising and promenading the room as he spoke; "judge what I suffered a few days ago, when your daughter, with an eloquence foreign to her sex and age, convinced us that all barriers, all precautions, would fall before the poniard of an assassin, provided he were but willing to sacrifice his own life. But what more particularly hurt me, was to hear her represent the same assassin as becoming great by his crime."

My mother looked at me with a countenance of dissatisfaction. Albert, who was sitting near the fire, said nothing; but I was sure he did not blame me.

"All that," said my mother, "comes of Laurette's speaking upon subjects which are not in the province of women. I have often told her how much that habit impaired her talents of pleasing; but she pays no attention to what I say on the subject. In my time, we only knew that the month of May was the month of roses, and our ignorance did not make us the less agreeable. For my scientific education, I never read any book but Telemachus, and yet, I believe, I can converse without becoming tiresome. I hope, my dear child, that you will correct that error."

"Ah! I hope not!" answered General Junot. "You have misunderstood me: it was not what Mademoiselle Laurette said, which gave me pain; but I immediately considered that you were acquainted with Aréna, that he often visited here; that you also knew Ceracchi, that these men might have heard your daughter speak in the same strain; and that the soul and the head of the latter, especially, was capable of replying to the appeal which he might fancy to be thus made to him, through the lips of a young girl, and might, in consequence, develop a few moments sooner his diabolical intentions. All this is very ridiculous, very senseless, is it not?" continued the General, seeing my brother smile at the last words; but I cannot help it; for the last week I have not in fact been master of my own thoughts. You may judge if they were likely to be calmed by the First Consul's resolution of going to the Opera this evening to expose himself to the poniards of assassins! We have yet only taken Ceracchi, and Aréna,

and, I believe, Demerville.* They are just taken, but they were not the only conspirators. It is pretended that England, and the English committee, are concerned; always the English. There are in this affair only two motives: one is the hatred of the family and of Corsica; the other a fanaticism of liberty carried to madness. This is what should alarm the friends of the First Consul. The most active police has no power in such a case, and no means of prevention."—"And what," said my mother, "does Fouché say to all this?"

The General made no answer, but his forehead became wrinkled, and his brows contracted; he crossed his arms on his breast, and continued his walk sometime in silence, then said, "Do not speak of that man."

His expression, even in silence, was of such a nature that it stupified us all. I have since learned the cause of this sentiment, which broke through all Junot's efforts to restrain it; and I felt what he must have suffered under such a conviction.

"No; do not speak to me of that man, particularly to-day. I have had a scene with him this morning! If he had a heart—but he knew better. If he had but red blood in his veins, we should have cut each other's throats like brave men, like men at least. What nonsense to come and tell me that this affair of Ceracchi was but child's play, to me, who for twelve days past have followed him step by step, while he,—but he is in the right," he continued with a bitter smile: "he told me, and I believe it is true, that he should know as much about it in an hour. I am almost sure of the treason of—"

Albert, who had risen, approached Junot, and whispered to him. The General made an inclination of his head, and pressed my brother's hand; they again exchanged a few words, and he resumed:

"And what do you think he said upon this resolution of the First Consul to go to the Opera? He blamed him as I did; but what was the motive? 'Because,' says he, 'it is an ambush!' You suppose, no doubt, that this deprecated ambush was for the First Consul? No such thing; it was for these honest rascals, whose necks I would wring as willingly as a sparrow's,† and with no more scruple, after what I have learned of them, and the honourable function which I find them

* A man by the name of Diana was an accomplice, and arrested the same evening.

† I here make the General speak (as I do all those whose words I have frequent occasion to report) in the language he used in familiar intercourse, when sufficiently excited to neglect chastening his conversation, or when he omitted to speak in a more pure style; which, however, he could do as well as many others, if not better, when so disposed.

exercising. He made me an oration, which I believe was taken from his collection of homilies, by which he proposed to prove that the affair might be prevented going to this length. As I had already had a very warm discussion upon the same subject with a personage whom the First Consul will know, some day, what he really is, (and the time is happily not far distant,) and as I knew that this personage and Fouché had been emulating each other in their interference in this affair, I was desirous that my way of thinking should be equally known to both of them. I therefore obliged Fouché to explain himself clearly, and to tell me that it was wrong to lead on these men to the moment of executing their design, since it could be prevented. That was his opinion.

"And thus, said I, you would replace in society two men who have evidently conspired against the chief of the state, and that not to force him to resign his authority, not to remove him from it, but to murder him for the satisfaction of their own passions. Do you believe that Ceracchi would be content to die if, in sacrificing himself, he could kill the First Consul; putting him to death to glut an inordinate passion, in obedience to a species of monomania; do you believe that this madman will be cured by a simple admonition, or by an act of generosity? No; he must kill the man, whom he looks upon as a tyrant, and whom he will never be induced to see in any other light. Or do you believe that Aréna, during so many years the enemy of General Bonaparte, will abjure his hatred against the First Consul because the latter has taken up the character of Augustus? No! It is his death they desire. Listen to the expression of Ceracchi in buying a poniard: '*I should like better a good knife that does not shut; and the blade solid and sure, and not fail in the hand!*' To leave a determined assassin like this to his bloodthirsty contrivances, what is it but to ensure to-morrow the full execution of the project you have averted to-day? This is not my first knowledge of the Arénas. The First Consul, who is thoroughly good-hearted, is willing to forget the evil they have always been forward to do him. But I have not so forgiving a soul. I remember his arrest in the South.* I have heard the particulars of the 18th of Brumaire,† and am completely acquainted

* When Bonaparte was arrested by command of Salicetti, the Adjutant-General Aréna, the Commissary Denniée, and the Commandant of Gendarmerie Vervain, were the persons intrusted with the execution of the order.

† It is Junot who speaks: he was convinced that the representative Aréna, elder brother of the conspirator (they must not be confounded), had attempted to assassinate General Bonaparte at Saint-Cloud. I do not believe it: he hated Bonaparte, but would not have assassinated him.

with all the circumstances of the present affair.* Certainly I trembled to see the First Consul go to face death, which, notwithstanding all our cares, he might encounter; but, on the other hand, I saw but this means of cutting through the net they had cast around him. His existence would be rendered miserable, supposing it were preserved. There would be daily new conspiracies; a hydra constantly reviving. When Fouché," continued Junot, "found that I saw through him, notwithstanding his cunning, he had recourse to the sentiments of humanity. He! Fouché! He harangued me in the style of a homily; and all this with a head that one would suppose he had stolen from a skeleton. Oh! what a man! And the First Consul will place faith in his words! At length we shall see the conclusion of this affair, which he and another called child's play—reason in all things."

My mother listened attentively, and I remarked that during General Junot's long discourse, she and my brother often interchanged signs of acquiescence. When he had ceased speaking, she told him how just she considered his observations upon the Arénas to be. "They nourish hatred in their hearts," said she; "a hatred which may be dated long previously to the 18th of Brumaire, or to the events of Italy. I know not from what it arises, but I am sure that it exists. One thing that surprises me is, that Napoleon, Lucien, and Joseph, are the sole objects of this hatred; and I believe they return it, though, to say the truth, I have only conjectures respecting their sentiments, while I have proofs of the hatred of the Arénas towards them. With respect to Ceracchi, nothing you could say of him would surprise me. Permon, who knew him in Italy, introduced him to me at a ball at M. Delanoue's. Since then, I have sometimes seen him at Madame Magimelli's at Auteuil; I acknowledge that his exaggerated notions have made me tremble; yet his distaste of life, and his profound melancholy, rendered him interesting." Albert observed, that his heart must have been profoundly wounded by the injuries which he imagined he had to reproach Bonaparte with; "For I have seen him," said he, "weep with enthusiasm in only speaking of him; and when he was required to model his bust, or rather, when he him-

* The plan of the conspirators was to stab the First Consul, as he came out of his box, which, as I have before observed, was on the left between the columns. At this period the First Consul went in and out by the general entrance. The gallery and the staircase leading to the Rue de Louvois were always crowded with people to see him pass. The assassins were to strike as he stepped out of the box. Colonel Savary behaved nobly on this occasion; he would leave the box first, though he was not the person appointed to do so.

self requested permission to execute it, he was so much affected in delineating the traits of him whom he believed destined to regenerate the world, that I have heard it asserted by persons who knew the fact, that he was compelled to abandon his task. This man had a soul of fire."

I had also seen this Ceracchi, and witnessed some of his ebullitions of enthusiastic republicanism at Madame Magimelli's; and I confess he had not produced upon my mind the same disagreeable impressions that he had upon my mother. I pitied him warmly, for it was impossible not to perceive that his excessive sensibility must render him miserable.

The conversation now returned to the Arénas; my mother was much affected by this arrest. Her native country was always dear to her heart, and Aréna was a fellow-countryman. Junot put several questions to her respecting the conduct of the brothers for some years past at Paris. My mother communicated all that she knew on this subject, and it was but little: because, of all the Corsicans at Paris, the Arénas were those who visited her the least frequently. This conversation, however, brought to my mother's recollection a rather remarkable one, which passed between her and Pépé Aréna on the 17th of Brumaire, the eve of the famous 18th. On that day we were visited by several Corsican representatives, whom we had not seen for some time before, and among them Pépé Aréna. He came in the morning. His countenance was full of care, and she remarked it to him. He smiled, but his smile was forced. He spoke to her of Corsica, of my grandmother and my uncles; then suddenly inquired if she had seen Lucien lately. My mother answered that she saw him nearly every day, which was true; and as she had much friendship for the young tribune of the people, she spoke of the high reputation he had already acquired as an orator: my brother-in-law, who, as we have seen, was his intimate friend, at that time frequently brought us the journals which reported the speeches (almost always extempore) which he pronounced in the Council of Five Hundred. Some of these improvisations contained admirable strokes of eloquence. "I do not always agree in opinion with him," said my mother; "but I do not therefore the less esteem his talents and his character."

"He is very young, to wish to direct us," said Aréna, with an expression of some bitterness (Lucien was in fact the youngest member of the Council of Five Hundred). "But it seems to me that your opinions are the same," replied my mother; "what then signifies the age of a man, provided he has ability? His brother has not waited to be forty years old to gain battles."—"Ah! ah! you are reconciled

with General Bonaparte! He has been, then, to beg pardon; for, faith, he could do no less."—"We are not now discussing the subject of pardon or offences," said my mother, a little displeased. "I was speaking of Lucien and the glory of his brother."*

At the moment when Pépé was about to reply, some one entered, and the conversation instantly ceased. Aréna soon after took up his hat to depart; my mother invited him to dine, which he declined, pleading an engagement in the country. My mother told him, laughing, that he was offended, which he denied; but she afterwards told us, that, from that moment, she was convinced that Lucien, and whoever bore the name of Bonaparte, was held in great dislike by Aréna.

CHAPTER XLIII.

My mother's illness and long convalescence—My brother and a porter—Watching and supper—The bath a betrayer—Scene of burglary by night—Terrible alarms—Conversation of the thieves—Frightful situation—Recital of this adventure to the First Consul—Bonaparte's singular question.

In the first year of the consulate, one of those adventures happened to me which sometimes influence the whole life of an individual, by making an entire change in the character of some of its attributes. The impression made upon my mind by the terrors of the night I am going to describe, was so great, that I lost for a time every vestige of courage; and if its effects have at length been sufficiently overcome to protect me from making myself ridiculous, I have rather to thank the efforts of my reason for the remedy, than the simple operation of time.

My mother was recovering from a malady, as alarming as it was painful—an abscess of the head, caused by a severe blow against a marble mantelpiece. During the thirteen days in which the humour was forming, my poor mother's sufferings were distracting, and without a moment's respite. Fortunately it found a vent by the ear; for a long time afterwards the smallest unusual noise produced headaches so violent, that they were at first attributed to the tic-douloureux.

* One of the most curious effects of my mother's relations with Napoleon was, that any thing said against him in her presence always offended her. She only spoke of her own displeasure of him to her most intimate friends.

Her convalescence was very tedious, and demanded the utmost care. The doctors particularly ordered that her sleep should be prolonged as much as possible, and that she should be kept perfectly quiet.

My brother was in the habit of spending the décadi in the country, and not returning home till the following morning. In consequence of some business he was transacting for a friend, he had, on the night I am speaking of, the temporary custody of a large sum of money, and both these circumstances were known to a porter, whom he had been long in the habit of employing in various commissions. This man had carried home for my brother a chest clamped with iron, and secured by a capital lock; its contents were valuable, and so heavy, that the man was much fatigued by his exertion, and Albert offered him a glass of wine, saying, "Drink, my poor fellow, it will do you good, for you are terribly hot." The porter, shaking his head, observed, "Oh! I am accustomed to act the beast of burden, you could not have carried half as much." My brother, whose cheerful and sociable temper made him always ready with a jest, answered him laughing, "But I have carried double though." At first, the man started and exclaimed, "It is impossible!" but presently added, "Oh! I understand!" and was about to depart, when he was ordered to fetch my brother's cabriolet for his excursion to Sainte-Mandé.

When, however, the cabriolet was at the door, and the porter, who by his habits of employment in the family, knew that Albert would not return till the next morning, was departed, the plan was changed, and the carriage remanded in consequence of my mother's unwillingness to part with my brother. The day passed happily, and my mother went to bed at her usual hour, and in good spirits.

I remained by her side till she was perfectly asleep, and when convinced by the regularity of her respiration that she was both asleep and easy, I left her about midnight, and repaired to my own apartment, separated from that of my mother's only by a door, which I left ajar. I then took up a book, being unwilling to retire to my bed till quite satisfied that my mother's sleep would be calm. The silence of night now enveloped the city, only broken at intervals by the rapid passage of a carriage, or a distant murmur, which served to show that some few individuals were still awake; these sounds, however, were more and more rarely heard, till at length the quiet in the street became as complete as that which reigned in my little apartment.

By a small timepiece on my little table, I observed that it now wanted but a quarter to one. My mother had then been an hour asleep, and I concluded that I might safely lie down; but in preparing to do so I found myself hungry, and began to look round for my supper. The

habit of sitting up a great part of the night had obliged me to supply the want of rest with an extra meal, and some fruit, with bread or cake, was generally left in my room for this purpose. Sometimes, however, this was forgotten both by the servants and myself, and on such occasions I seldom slept well. This night I looked in vain for my usual refreshment, but the key of the dining-room lay on my table.

It will be recollected that I have already described the form and disposition of our residence. The kitchen was on the basement, the offices of the domestic establishment on the ground floor, my mother's apartments and mine on the first floor, my brother's on the second, and the sleeping-rooms of the servants, not one of whom was lodged below us, all in the attic story. The rooms surrounded the staircase, and were connected by a gallery. On seeing the dining-room key, which was always deposited in my room when the apartments were closed for the night, I remembered that in the buffet I should find something to eat, and, accordingly, with as little noise as possible, fearing that I might wake my mother, I opened my own door and crossed the landing-place to that of the dining-room. There I found both strawberries and bread, and helping myself, I was about to sit down at the dining-table to eat them; but recollecting that my mother might awake and be alarmed, if she called, without receiving an answer, I returned with my supper to my own room. Having bolted my door rather from habit than prudence, I sat down with a good appetite, and perfect cheerfulness, to enjoy some excellent strawberries, and satisfy my hunger with bread.

I had long been mistress of the establishment, and one of the rules of good housekeeping which I had found the most difficulty in enforcing, had always been the retirement of the servants for the night at the same time with ourselves. My commands were, that, by twelve o'clock, every one in the house should be in bed; but there were certain parties at dominos and cards, which sometimes kept them up till two o'clock in the morning, and I had threatened, and was determined to punish the next infraction of my law in which I should detect them.

I had been about ten minutes at supper when the perfect quiet of the house was interrupted by a noise below stairs. My suspicions were immediately awakened, and the idea that my imperial will was again disobeyed, put me much out of humour. While I was grumbling and eating, my suspicions were changed to conviction; the noise of footsteps, regular, light, and slow, as those of persons fearing to be heard, distinctly reached my ear. I was sure that some persons were coming up the first flight of stone stairs. Determined to take them

in the fact, I very gently approached my room-door, that opened upon the stairs, and was slowly and carefully withdrawing the bolts, saying to myself, I shall not this time be told that you never sit up after midnight, it is now one by my timepiece; but wishing to make quite sure of my object, I held the second bolt in my hand to wait till the whole procession, shoes in hand as I supposed, should be in the act of passing the door. At this moment a noise, which I could compare to nothing but a stroke upon a great drum, saluted my ears, and made me start. It came from my mother's bath, which stood at one corner of the landing. Still more provoked by this noise, which I feared would wake my mother, I was about to throw open the door, when I suddenly recollected that the servants, who knew where the bath was, would certainly not have suffered themselves to be betrayed by it. But if it be not they, who can it be? These reflections made my heart beat, and so shook my frame that I was obliged to lean against the door-post for support, while I instinctively replaced the bolts I had so imprudently withdrawn. During this interval the persons were mounting the second staircase, which being of wood I could hear them more distinctly than before, and was satisfied that their shoes were much stouter and more clumsy than those of any of our household. What was I to do? Should I wake my mother? The consequence would certainly be a frightful increase of her illness. I had not, it is true, any certainty that the nocturnal intruders were banditti, but at that time the most horrible assassinations were common not only in the neighbourhood of the capital, but in Paris itself. These reflections passed through my mind much quicker than I can write them, but brought no counsel that promised relief from my painful state of apprehension. I listened long and anxiously for some further noise, but all was quiet; it was a false alarm, thought I, and was certainly the servants; I began to breathe more freely, and looked at my timepiece, thinking that an hour at least had passed while I was upon the watch; how much was I surprised to find that the hand had only advanced ten minutes! As all was quiet, I proposed to finish my supper and go to bed, but I trembled, and could scarcely swallow; however, I ate my strawberries, and had the last spoonful in my hand, when a very distinct creaking, and the repressed sounds of several footsteps, proved that the persons I had before heard were now coming down the second staircase. The noise was not produced by an alarmed imagination, it was real; persons were coming down stairs with precaution, but certainly coming down; and I could no longer flatter myself that it was the servants. On reaching the landing-place between my door and that of the dining-room, two persons sat down on

the steps of the staircase, and began to converse in an under-tone. Trembling from head to foot, I, however, again approached the door, and, listening, heard a few broken sentences, from which I could comprehend that they believed Albert to be in the country; something too I heard of the impenetrable locks of La Dru, two of which fastened his door, and something of its being useless to break into my mother's room. Beyond this I could only collect the broken words—late—daybreak—mother—nothing here—up-stairs—the young one's door. Something was said in reply, and the answer, "Well, let us try," accompanied by the sound of several pieces of iron, gently laid down upon the stone, completed my terror. I considered a moment whether I had not forgotten to shut the dining-room door, by which an entry would be offered to the whole suite of apartments. I looked round, and the sight of the key lying upon my table just afforded me presence of mind enough to determine how to act; it was manifest they were endeavouring to open that door; its resistance could not be long; to wake my mother was now indispensable, and I did so with all the precaution I was capable of. But I could not secure her against alarm; and I had no sooner pronounced the word 'thieves,' than with her usual precipitation she seized the three bell-pulls which were suspended by her bed, and pulled them altogether, screaming at the same time with all her strength.

"Oh, recollect Albert! you will be his death!" I exclaimed, convinced that the first sound of her bell would bring him out quite unprepared to meet the attack of assassins; but while I was making these reflections, and endeavouring to hush her screams, I heard the villains run off, and from the continued sound of hurried steps on the stairs, felt convinced that some of them had been left to pursue their attempts upon my brother's strong locks, while the two had been consulting near my door upon their ulterior operations. The first sound of her bell had alarmed them, and they were now in hasty retreat. I ran to my window, which overlooked our court, and while I screamed loudly for help, to disturb the coachman and neighbours, saw the two last of the thieves jumping from our wall into the great timber-yard, then in the Rue Joubert, and which separated our house from that of M. de Caulaincourt.

Meanwhile, my mother continued to ring and call, and the family were soon moving; my brother, on opening his door, found a centre-bit introduced just below the first bolt, and some progress already made in working it; but the landing before my door was a perfect arsenal; there lay two more centre-bits, a crowbar, several iron hooks to serve for picklocks, and two or three keys. My brother

put on his great-coat, and went out to alarm the police; the gate of the timber-yard was found open, and a ladder against our wall; but no further trace of the robbers was discovered. It was morning when he returned; he found my mother better than could be expected, but distracted on my account. I had received a shock, the immediate effect of which was terrible, and threatened to be long-during.

I was seized with a fever, which brought on delirium; the impression of the thieves on the landing was always vividly before me, and the idea that they were murdering me, and that my poor mother would wake in the midst of assassins, covered with the blood of her child, was for a length of time never absent from my mind; they feared for my life, or at least for my reason. I was conducted from place to place, every effort to divert me was tried, and my own exertions assisting the affectionate attentions of those around me, my health improved; and though for a long time I was the greatest coward imaginable, and have always continued unreasonably timid, I am now able to rally my thoughts, and to exert some presence of mind, even in circumstances of actual danger.

"There, Sire," said I to the Emperor, on concluding this history (it was in the year 1806), "is the true cause of my cowardice, which you were inquiring about. I am not now so foolish as to be unable, like a child of six years old, to remain for a moment in the dark, but my nervous system continues painfully affected by the consequences of this fright. Neither reason, nor any effort of mind, can remove the impression, which the idea of what would have been the consequence had I remained in the dining-room to eat my strawberries, has produced." And though six years had elapsed since that terrible night, the Emperor observed me turn pale, and said so.

"I assure your Majesty that the same impression has often happened to me after this event, when I have only had occasion to cross that fearful landing-place."—"It is strange," said the Emperor; and began to walk the room.

It was at St. Cloud, in the apartment of the Princess Borghèse, one fine summer evening that I related my tale; there is a person very remarkable in the present day, who was at that time famous for stories of robbers and ghosts, which he told with great success. The apartments of the Princess were on the ground to the left on entering the great court of the palace. The Emperor, after continuing his walk some time, and when other recollections had superseded in my mind the history I had related, suddenly stopped opposite to me, and said, "Has not this adventure given you a great antipathy to strawberries?"

For a few seconds I made no answer, and then said, "No, Sire; I am, on the contrary, passionately fond of them."—"That is the nature of woman," said he; "dangers attach them."

CHAPTER XLIV.

Lucien's republicanism, and a remarkable conversation with him after the conspiracy of Ceracchi—The explanation of Lucien's embassy to Spain—The Consul of the year VIII. and the Consul of the year IX.—Bonaparte's observation to Junot on the occasion of my marriage and the conspiracy—Junot's family—Signature of my contract of marriage—My brother's generosity, and the delicacy of his conduct towards me—M. Laquien de Bois-Cressy—Signature of my marriage contract by the First Consul, and singular recollections—Goodness of Bonaparte towards my brother—M. Duquesnoy, Junot's friend—Aggregated difficulties—Junot's repugnance to be married at church—My determination—Conversation between me and Junot—My brother's intervention, and my marriage at church agreed to by mutual concession—Junot's motives—Project of a nocturnal marriage—My *trousseau* and *corbeille*—Junot's present to my mother.

Some days after the discovery of Aréna and Ceracchi's conspiracy, Lucien came to see us; he was thoughtful, and did not conceal that the repeated attempts upon his brother's life caused him serious uneasiness. This was the third in the course of one year; the first was on the road to Malmaison; the second in the Tuileries. "How," said he, "can such strokes be averted? Jacques Clement, Ravaillac, Damien, Jean Chatel, all these men executed their projects, because, in forming them, they held their own lives for nothing. If Ceracchi had been alone, as was his original intention, my brother had been no more; but he thought, by taking associates, to make his success more certain: he deceived himself."—"But," observed my mother, "your reflections are alarming; for how then can your brother be protected?"—"He only can protect himself," replied Lucien. "He is the son of the Revolution; he must march in the principles it has consecrated; above all things, he must forbear any attempt against the liberty of the citizens. His route is traced, he must follow it, or he is lost, and we are lost with him. It will not now answer to attempt fettering a people, who feel their liberty and their strength; or we shall see the Lilliputian bonds broken by Gulliver."

Junot and my brother remarked to him, that all the First Consul's actions announced plainly the principles of a good republican, and that

no one could accuse him of departing from those principles;* and Junot proceeded with animation. "No pity is due to those who would propose to assassinate him, upon pretence of defending an illusory liberty, which the First Consul protects and consolidates. I do not dissemble my opinion in this respect."

"Nor do I," said Albert: "for such beings appear to me a hundred times more guilty than Ravaillac or Jacques Clement. A motive of religion and fanaticism formed the excuse of their parricide; while the men at present in question are actuated only by private and particular interests, all, at least, except Ceracchi, and he is mad."

"That may be the case with the conspirators in this last affair," said Lucien; "but do not imagine that France does not still contain great minds, the guardians of our liberties, always ready as an advanced guard in their defence. This breast," and he struck his, as he continued speaking in a voice of emotion, "contains a French and patriotic heart. My brother knows me; and Junot, and all who are about him, know that I never cease to recall to his mind, with all the energy of a French and free soul, the solemn engagements which he contracted with the nation on the 19th Brumaire, and of which I am the guarantee."

Then turning towards Junot, he added, "You remember the conversation you witnessed four days ago? Well, I shall always speak thus, and no fear will make me deviate from my path. If the men who surrounded my brother in the government choose to assist him in measures oppressive to the country, I shall not increase their number; and on the last day of the liberty of the republic, I shall go and seek another country."

This conversation proves that Lucien was bent on opposing Napoleon's plans for a centralisation of power. That which Junot had witnessed at Malmaison, was the discussion of many regulations relating to the prefects which Lucien would not authorize, considering them too arbitrary. To resist Napoleon was to ensure his revenge. Lucien was indeed his brother, but the determination of his character was in all things predominant; and this conversation, together with Lucien's perseverance in reminding his brother of his promise of the 19th of Brumaire, explained to me his embassy to Spain, which took place a few weeks afterwards. Already the Consul of the year IX. was compared with the Consul of the year VIII.; the General Bona-

* The particular era, and especially the prepossessions of the speaker, must always be carefully noted. This is not the only time that I shall have occasion to represent Junot perfectly sincere in his persuasion, that Napoleon was an honest republican.

parte of Toulon and Italy, founding republics, daughters of France, with the General Bonaparte seeking to concentrate all the powers of the state in his own person. Lucien might hear, in my mother's saloon, reflections made with a smile, in an under-tone, by persons who had not faith enough in republican vocations to believe that Bonaparte would support the system he announced on the 19th Brumaire. Many were even simple enough to speak of General Monk and of Charles II. Lucien heard all this and similar language from various quarters, and he wished to prevent, not the evil only, but the suspicion of it.

When tranquillity was restored, by the arrest of the other conspirators (Topino-Lebrun, Demervelle, etc.), the conclusion of my marriage was hastened. The first consul had said to Junot, "Do you know that your marriage has been held by a very slender thread, my poor Junot? For I believe if these rascals had killed me the alliance with you would have been little cared for." Bonaparte would not have uttered such a sentiment three or four years preceding. But on attaining absolute power he took up an idea, which was, perhaps, the cause of his ruin, but to which at least he always attached great importance, that men are governed and led by motives of interest or fear.

On the 27th of October all the family of Junot arrived at Paris, and were presented to my mother; and never till this day had I duly appreciated the virtues of his heart. Sensible of the wide difference which a Parisian education, and constant intercourse with the best society of Paris, made between our manners and those of his mother and sister, who knew nothing beyond the towns of Burgundy, he dreaded to perceive in me a system of ridicule which would have rendered him miserable; and never shall I forget the expression of tenderness and respect with which he presented his mother to mine, and the action which seemed to entreat, though he never used the words, that I would be a daughter to his parents. He had no reason to fear. They were too good and too respectable not to demand and to secure my duty and love.

The next day the marriage contract was signed, and it was not till that moment that I learned that my brother, from his own means, endowed me with sixty thousand francs, in satisfaction, as the marriage settlement expressed it, of my claims on the paternal inheritance. My claims! when we all knew that none of my father's property ever had been or ever would be realized; the greater part of it was in the English funds! but it would not have been agreeable to General Junot to receive my dower as a gift from my brother, and therefore

this clause was introduced. Fifty thousand francs more were added by M. Lequien de Bois-Cressy, an old friend of my father, and who was to be my mother's second husband; he gave me his dower, as his future daughter-in-law, secured upon an estate in Brittany. He was rich and liberal; I was not, therefore, surprised at this present; but that my brother, who, from the proceeds of his own industry, had maintained my mother's house, and furnished my expensive education, should now act so nobly, was even more than my gratitude could express; nor was this lessened by the affectionate terms in which he replied to my insufficient thanks: "Do not speak thus," said he, embracing me with that fraternal tenderness which he had always shown me; "do you not know that my mother and yourself are the sole objects of my affection and of my happiness? I live only for you. It is, then, quite natural that the produce of my labours should be employed for your benefit. A great and an unhoped-for marriage is offered you; the money is my own, and how could I dispose of it better than in making your fortune some way answerable to the establishment you are about to form?"

A circumstance arising out of this will show the First Consul's prodigious memory, even in matters of the smallest importance to himself. The following day, the 29th of October, Junot, accompanied by my brother, as my nearest relation, attended at the Tuileries for the signature of the marriage contract. The First Consul received my brother with great kindness; questioned him upon his prospects and his intentions; spoke of my mother with friendship, and of me with an interest which affected me much when Albert repeated the conversation. But for the singular part of the interview: he desired the contract to be read to him. When the sixty thousand francs from my paternal inheritance were named, he made a movement indicative of surprise, and another, though less marked, at the mention of the fifty thousand francs of M. de Bois-Cressy, but made no remark upon either. When the lecture was completed he took my brother by the arm, led him to the recess of a window, and said to him, "Permon, I remember that when your father died he left nothing. At that period I visited your mother daily; and you no doubt know," added he, with an air sufficiently embarrassed, "that at the same time I was desirous of marrying you to my sister, Madame Leclerc, and of arranging the future marriage of Mademoiselle Loulou with that *mauvais sujet*, my brother Jerome." (He did not speak of the principal marriage he planned at that period.) "Well, Madame Permon then told me that her husband left nothing. What then does this mean?" Albert repeated to the First Consul what he had already said to me, entreat-

ing him not to mention it. Napoleon looked at him with an indefinable expression, and said, "You are a generous fellow, my dear Permon; you are a generous fellow; I shall take care of you. But you allow yourself to be forgotten. Why do you never come to the Tuileries? Your brother-in-law will now remind you of me, and will also remind me of you." Accordingly, a few days afterwards, Junot solicited for Albert a situation in which he might give proofs of his attachment to the cause of the 9th of November, and the First Consul appointed him to one of the three then existing places of Commissary-general of the Police of France.

The day preceding my marriage, a circumstance at once trifling and serious had nearly caused its rupture. A friend of Junot's, M. Duquesnoy, was Mayor of the 7th arrondissement: the General, as Commandant of Paris, not belonging more to one mayoralty than another, wished his marriage to be performed before M. Duquesnoy: and he inquired of my mother whether she supposed it would make any difference to me. My mother replied, that she was herself perfectly willing, and did not believe that I should be otherwise, but that she would send for me to answer for myself. On General Junot's putting his request to me, I answered, that in this, as in every thing else, my mother was mistress of my actions on so solemn a day. I only observed that the distance to the mayoralty of M. Duquesnoy in the Rue de Jouy, quartier Saint Antoine, was long, and that I should not fear fatiguing my mother if it were no farther off than our church of St. Louis, which being at the extremity of the Rue Thiroux, was directly opposite our house. I did not at that moment remark General Junot's astonishment; but having embraced my mother, left the room.

I was no sooner gone than the General asked my mother if I expected to be married at church?

"To be married at church!" she cried; "where then would you have her expect to be married? Before your friend with the scarf I suppose? But, my child, you have surely lost your wits. How could you entertain the idea that not my daughter only, but myself and her brother, could consent to a purely republican marriage? As for Laurette, I promise you, she is capable of thanking you for your intentions, if you should propose this to her." General Junot walked about much agitated.—"Will you permit me to speak upon the subject to Mademoiselle Laurette in private? situated as we now are there can be no objection to my request."

My mother shrugged her shoulders. "You know not what you are talking of," said she; "until you become her husband, you are but

a stranger, and what you wish to say is not likely to make her your friend; why do you want to make a secret of it? Why am I not to be present?"—"Because calmness is necessary in treating of such a matter; but I can speak to Mademoiselle Laurette here, with the door of your chamber open." I was called: nothing could exceed my astonishment, my grief I may say, in hearing this strange proposition. I did not conceal it: the General replied, that situated as he was, it was impossible he could be married at church, "to make a show of myself," added he; "for you could not prevent all the beggars and low people of the Chaussée d'Antin from surrounding the house, and even filling the church. And I am to appear in uniform amidst such a crowd!"

"I do not know," I answered, "what you should find disagreeable in being seen to perform an act which is the duty of every Christian (I am not speaking as a devotee), in entering upon the engagements which we propose to take upon ourselves to-morrow. The very Pagans sought the sanction of this act, the most important of their lives, in the temples of their gods. The Turks only are content with the Cadi, and I hope it is not from them you have taken arguments in support of your extraordinary proposition."—"I am much hurt by your obstinacy," said Junot; "how can you, with your sense, persist in a formality which your education ought to have taught you to consider a nullity?"

"I am very young, General, to discuss so serious a question. I understand nothing of the controversy, except that I was born in the Christian religion, and that this religion imposes duties upon me to which I am, at least, as much bound as the adorers of Dagon were to theirs. I can only say that, very certainly, I shall not stir a step from this house if it be not to go where my duty calls me. Be assured, General, that, notwithstanding the advanced state of the preparations, our marriage will not take place, unless the church shall bless it."

I stood up to go away. The General took my hand, and saw that my eyes were full of tears. He stamped his foot with violence, and let slip a very unusual expression: "Junot!—Junot!"—cried my mother, from her chamber, where she heard all that passed, "Junot! is that proper language to use?"

"You afflict me greatly," said the General. "It distresses me to give you pain; but, after all, this is a mere childish whim on your part, which you persist in, because you have been told to do so; while to me it is a matter of serious consequence. Do you know that it is nothing less than a confession of faith?"—"And suppose it is?" said I, "what was the religion of your fathers? You have been baptized,

you have been confirmed, you have received your first communion, you have confessed: here, then, are four sacraments of which you have partaken, and when that of marriage comes in its course, suddenly you turn renegade, apostate, perhaps! No, no, General, it must not be."

Having said this, I went to my mother's room, where I found my brother. Junot followed me, and addressing himself to Albert, submitted to him the question which caused this debate; he was in despair: what I insisted upon was of no importance whatever, he said, and would seriously compromise him. "Well!" said I, standing up, "I can say no more upon the subject of which I ought never to have permitted the discussion. I only regret that General Junot should, for a moment, have believed that my principles would suffer me to accede to the proposition he has this morning made."

I retired to my chamber, and was just then informed that Mademoiselle L'Olive, and Mademoiselle de Beuvry, were in the saloon, and that they brought, in two coaches, the articles which composed my *trousseau* and *corbeille*;* the two baskets which were to contain them, followed on a truck, that of the trousseau, in particular, was so large, that no coach could contain it.

I sent to request my brother's presence, and he came to me immediately. "My dear friend," said I to him, "this affair will become serious if the intervention of your friendship and excellent sense does not prevent it. Not that I request your advice, because my resolution is irrevocably taken, and if General Junot is equally determined, a rupture is inevitable; to you, therefore, I refer to render it as little as possible painful to our poor mother. The stroke will be terrible to her."

Albert took my two hands in his, and embraced me tenderly, wiping away my tears which flowed abundantly. He walked up and down the room in silent meditation, then stopped some time before the window; my maid, Josephine, came to require my attendance in my mother's room. "I cannot go," said I, to Albert; and I begged him to go to my mother, whose apartment was only separated from mine by a very small drawing-room, which had no door towards my chamber. He went, and I had scarce been ten minutes alone, when my mother's room-door opened, and she came to me. "My child,"

* We have no words directly synonymous to these; both signify the bridal paraphernalia. The "trousseau" is that part of it which is furnished by the bride's family. The "corbeille" is the bridegroom's present. The several articles composing each, will be best illustrated in the text.—*Translator's Note.*

said she, "here is one who does not ask your pardon, which, nevertheless, I hope you will grant."

Those who were well acquainted with General Junot, knew how much the expression of his countenance varied when he was particularly agitated. At this moment he was scarcely recognizable; he advanced behind my mother, leaning on Albert's arm, changing colour so rapidly, that he appeared to be ill. "Your brother," said he, "has been showing me, how much I have distressed you; he will now explain to you that I am not so much to blame as you may suppose; and if you will take into consideration the character of a soldier full of honour and frankness, but who could not entertain the same ideas with you upon the subject we have been discussing, you will be indulgent and pardon me."

My brother then affectionately taking my hand, and holding his other hand to Junot, said to me, "Our friend has been explaining to me, that being the Commandant of Paris, and invested with the confidence of the First Consul, he objects to appearing in open day, on an occasion so solemn as his marriage, to perform in a church a sacred act of religion, because, on account of his political position, it would make him a sort of spectacle to the whole town. You know me, my sister; you know that my heart is devoted to you and to honour. Well, after what he has said, I have engaged to persuade you to comply with his wishes. The General does not desire to wound any of your religious convictions; he acknowledges that you are right in requiring the religious ceremony, but he requests that it may take place at night. I believe that this mutual concession will remove all obstacles on both sides." I looked at my mother, and receiving a sign of approbation from her, had nothing further to object, except my dislike to a nocturnal ceremony. It recalled those days of terror, when the bridal pair received by stealth the benediction which the priest accorded at the risk of his life. It was necessary, however, to be reasonable, and I consented, as my mother and brother approved it, that the ceremony should take place in the manner proposed.

I afterwards learned, that this sudden opposition was caused by the First Consul. This may appear extraordinary to those who remember, that two years afterwards he signed the Concordat; but all fruits do not ripen in one season. He had just escaped from the dagger of a man who accused him of attempting to overturn the institutions of republicanism, and he was not willing that the Commandant of Paris, known to possess his entire confidence, should perform a public act which might point to a new system of action on the part of his patron. He therefore particularly required of Junot, that he

should only go to church at night, upon the supposition that the family insist upon the religious ceremony. Junot, in his zeal to obey, exceeded his instructions. His religious notions, having passed his youth in an army where none such existed, were not those of incredulity, but of perfect indifference, and he had no suspicion of the effect his proposition would have upon me: in the first instance, then, he did not even speak of a nocturnal marriage, which in fact supplied all the conditions absolutely required by either party.

"At length, then," said my mother, when she had heard me pronounce my consent, "this grand affair is settled;" and turning to Junot, she added, "it has been all your fault. Who would ever have thought of coming on the eve of marriage to say, I will have nothing to do with the church? Come, fall on your knees, and beg pardon of your betrothed. Right. Now give him your hand, or rather your cheek, in recompense of that graceful act of submission. It is the last; to-morrow he will be your master. But, what now, is it not all settled?" The fact was, that this nocturnal ceremony, which did not please me at all, had moreover the inconvenience that it would be unaccompanied by a wedding mass; I whispered this new objection to the General, and it was presently removed by the promise that it should take place at twelve o'clock, the hour of midnight mass. My mother laughed on overhearing this discussion: "And now that we are all at length agreed," said she, "do me the favour, Monsieur, my son-in-law, to take your leave for the present; I must show the young lady her *trousseau*, and hear her opinion of my taste, we shall afterwards both sit in judgment upon yours." On entering the saloon, though it was large, I found myself much in the situation of Noah's dove, without a place of rest for my foot. From an immense basket, or rather portmanteau, of rose-coloured gros-de-Naples, embroidered with black chenille, made in the shape of a sarcophagus, bearing my cipher, an innumerable quantity of small packets, tied with pink or blue favours, strewed the room; these contained full-trimmed chemises with embroidered sleeves; pocket-handkerchiefs, petticoats, morning-gowns, dressing-gowns of India muslin, night-dresses, night-caps, morning-caps of all colours and all forms; the whole of these articles were embroidered and trimmed with Mechlin lace, or English point. Another portmanteau, of equal size, of green silk, embroidered in orange chenille, contained my numerous dresses, all worthy in fashion and taste to vie with the habiliments already described. This was an hour of magic for a girl of sixteen. Time passes away; mature years have already arrived; old age will follow; but never can the remembrance of this moment of my mother, as she now appeared, be

effaced from my mind. How eagerly did she watch my eyes, and when the peculiar elegance and good taste of any article of her own choice elicited my admiring exclamations, how did her fine black eyes sparkle, and her smiling rosy lips display the pearls they enclosed. Who can describe a mother's joy on such an occasion, or the effect it produces on the heart of an affectionate daughter! Taking my head between her two hands, and kissing my eyes, my ears, my cheeks, my hair, she threw herself on a settee, saying, "Come now, *mathia mou*,* seek something else that will please you."

The *trousseau* being fully examined, the *corbeille*† next demanded inspection.

At this time the custom of giving a basket or case for the articles of the *corbeille* was not yet exploded; fifty or sixty louis were spent upon a species of basket covered with rich silk or velvet, and highly ornamented, which stood for six or twelve months on the dressing-table of the bride, till, becoming tarnished and worn, it was no longer ornamental and was consigned to the lumber-room to be eaten by the rats, in spite of its finery. Now they do things with more sense, and lay out the money upon a valuable chest of longer duration. Mine then was an immensely large vase, covered with green and white velvet, richly embroidered with gold. Its foot was of gilded bronze, its cover of embroidered velvet, surmounted by a pine-apple of black velvet, transfixed by an arrow, from which were suspended on each side a crown, the one of olives, the other of laurel, both cut in bronzed gold.

This *corbeille* contained Cachemere shawls, veils of English point, gown trimmings of blond and Brussels point, dresses of white blond and black lace; pieces of India muslin, and of Turkish velvet, which the General had brought from Egypt; ball dresses for a bride; my presentation dress, and India muslin dresses embroidered in silver lama. Besides all these, there were flowers bought of Madame Roux;‡ ribands of all sizes and colours; bags (or as we now say reticules), they were then all the fashion, one of them of English point; gloves, fans, and essences. At each side of the corbeille was a sultan, or scented bags; the first contained all the implements of the toilet in gold enamelled black; the apparatus of the work-

* Greek words, meaning *light of my eyes;* a most caressing expression, which my mother habitually used towards me.

† It was Mademoiselle L'Olive, dress-maker to Madame Bonaparte, who had been instructed by Madame Murat to complete most of the objects of the "Corbeille," jointly with Junot.

‡ Madame Roux of Lyons: she lived in the Rue Sainte-Anne.

table, thimble, scissors, needle-case, bodkin, etc., all in gold set with fine pearls. The other sultan contained the jewel casket, and an opera-glass of mother-of-pearl and gold, set with two rows of diamonds. The casket contained settings for an entire suite of ornaments without the stones; six ears of golden corn, and a comb (which, on account of the immense quantity of my hair, was as large as those which are now worn) set with diamonds and pearls; a square medallion set with large pearls, containing a portrait of General Junot by Isabey, for the resemblance of which the artist's name will vouch; but of a size more fit to be affixed to the wall of a gallery than to be suspended from the neck; but this was the fashion of the day, and Madame Murat had one of her husband, also painted by Isabey, and larger than mine. The casket contained also a number of superb topazes brought from Egypt, of an incredible size. Oriental corals of extraordinary thickness, which I have since had engraved in relief at Florence by M. Hamelin, and several antique cameos; all these were unset. The bridal purse of gold links, connected together by delicate little stars of green enamel, the clasp also enamelled green, contained too weighty a sum of money, had it not consisted of bank-notes, except about fifty louis in pretty little sequins of Venice.

All these elegant presents had been completed under the direction of Madame Murat, and did infinite honour to her taste. At this time such a *corbeille* was a treasure of great rarity; for the first time, since the Revolution, it had reappeared at the marriage of Mademoiselle de Doudeauville with M. Pierre de Rastignac. Madame Murat's marriage followed after a considerable interval, and her *corbeille* was very rich; but as mine took place nearly a year later, not only was the *corbeille* more beautiful, but it was composed with more conformity to ancient customs, and in a more refined taste. After this time the *corbeille* and *trousseau* again became common, but were copies, not models, like those of Madame Murat's and mine.

But of all these beautiful gifts, nothing delighted me so much as Junot's affecting attention to my mother. She longed for a Cachemere shawl, but would never purchase one, because she said she could not afford one so good as she wished for; and I had determined that my wedding gift to her should be a red one, because that was the colour she preferred, but I had never whispered my intentions. However, together with my *corbeille*, came a small basket covered with white gros-de-Naples, embroidered in silks with my mother's cipher on the draperies, from which, the first thing that presented itself was a superb scarlet Cachemere shawl. The basket contained besides, a

purse like mine,* except that the enamel was a deep blue, and within it, instead of money, was a topaz of a perfect oval round, the size of a small apricot; gloves, ribands, and two magnificent fans. I cannot describe how sensibly I felt this amiable attention. When I thanked the General for it with an effusion of heart which I rather repressed than exaggerated, he replied, "I foresaw what you now express; and if I had not loved her who is about to become my mother, with filial tenderness, I should have done what I have, for the pleasure I enjoy at this moment."

CHAPTER XLV.

My opinion upon the peculiar province of romances—Anne of Austria's robe, and Mademoiselle's shoes—My wedding-day—Sister Rosalie and my confessor—Refusal to marry me at night—Scruples—The Vendean abbé—The clergy and the republican party—L'Abbé Lusthier patronized by Junot, and appointed Grand Vicar to the Bishop of Orleans—The curate of the Capuchins engaged—Wedding toilet—Family assembled—Junot's aides-de-camp, his witnesses—The Dames de la Halle and their bouquet—The municipality and the church.

As the Commentaries of Cæsar, the military Memoirs of Marshal Villars, the Reveries of Marshal Saxe, etc., relate solely to military affairs, sieges, battles, etc.; so I think should contemporary Memoirs render a faithful account of those incidents which are passing immediately around the author at the period of which he is treating, for the benefit of those who come after him. Every object should take its proper form and colouring, and that colouring should arouse in the mind of the reader a vivid impression of the event and its attendant circumstances; not the ball only should be described, but the ball-dress. To be exact in such matters, is not to be scrupulously minute, but a duty; for if the author be not expected to paint like Tacitus the vices of governments, corrupt, despotic, or declining, his pencil should trace the general outline of all that he has seen. In this picture, the daily scenes of the drawing-room should especially have their place; to speak of them is to portray them. To dress the personages in the coat or the gown they wore on the occasion under review, if one be

* The Bank of France was established in the month of February, 1800; I think it opened the following month. The two purses were made by Foncier, a very celebrated jeweller at that period.

fortunate enough to remember it, is to lay on those fresh and lively colours which give to the whole the charm of reality. This appears to me to be the grand attraction of the Memoirs of Madame de Motteville, de Mademoiselle! They are almost always badly written, frequently guilty of the grossest faults of style, yet what truth in their descriptions! We become acquainted with the individual we read of; and when Madame de Motteville speaks of the cambric sheets of Queen Anne, and the violet robe embroidered with pearls, which she wore on the day when she sat in council for the registering the edicts of toleration; and when Mademoiselle describes the form of her own shoes on the day when, according to the expression of M. de Luxembourg, she established the fortune of a cadet of good family; I imagine myself in the parliament of 1649 with the Queen, M. de Beaufort, M. the Coadjutor, and all the great men of the Fronde; or I fancy myself in the orangery of Versailles with Mademoiselle, in her white satin robe trimmed with carnation ribands and tassels of rubies. The writer of memoirs must give life to the scenes he represents; and that excess of detail which would destroy any other work, can alone produce the desired effect in this. Therefore it is that I have given a catalogue of my *corbeille* and *trousseau*. We should rejoice, in these days to find in Philip de Comines a description of a *corbeille* of the time of Louis XI., or Philip the Good; happily, he gives us better things.

On the 30th of October, at nine in the morning, every thing was in motion in our small house of the Rue de Saint-Croix, and earlier still in the hotel of the Rue de Verneuil. At daybreak I had left home, accompanied by sister Rosalie (who on hearing of my approaching marriage had quitted her retreat to be with me), to go to my confessor: this ought to have been done on the eve of my wedding. Having made my confession, I requested the venerable Abbé, my spiritual father, to perform the religious ceremony of my marriage in the church of the Capuchins,* at a quarter past twelve at night: and great was my astonishment at receiving a dry and peremptory refusal.

"What reason," said he emphatically, "can General Junot possibly have for refusing to make you his wife in the face of the sun? What does he fear? Ridicule! No! he has too much good sense for that. There must be some cause of objection unknown to us." I turned pale; but the Abbé, in spite of all sister Rosalie's entreaties, proceeded:—"Who shall satisfy me, who am the priest required to bless this marriage, that he is not already the husband of another?"

"Monsieur l'Abbé, Monsieur l'Abbé!" said Rosalie, in a voice of

* Now the church of Saint Louis, in the Rue de Saint-Croix.

lively reproach, at which I should not have conceived the good girl capable towards any ecclesiastic, "Monsieur l'Abbé, for heaven's sake, forbear! what are you doing?"—"My duty!" replied he in a stern voice; I perform that duty which nature and the laws impose upon the guardians of this young girl, and which they seem to have cast upon Providence. I then, as the minister of God, of that same Providence, am bound to watch over the interest of the fatherless orphan."

"Monsieur l'Abbé," said I, rising to go, "my gratitude to you is the same as if your charitable friendship had saved me from a great danger; but it is my duty to remind you that whatever danger may threaten me, I have a support, a protector, a father; and that M. de Permon, my brother, who unites all those titles, enlightened at once by his tenderness for me and his acute penetration, is capable of judging whether I am deceived by a man whose reputation for honour and loyalty stand so high. I have already explained to you, sir, the reason why he wishes to receive the nuptial benediction at night."

"The reason is injurious to you," said the Abbé, with increasing anger. "Why should the Commandant of Paris fear to show himself in uniform in one of the churches which his General has just reopened! He would not manifest the same repugnance to exhibit himself to-morrow in the Temple of Victory, now called Sulpice, instead of Saint-Sulpice." (This was, in fact, the denomination now given to Saint-Sulpice, and a fête was at this very time announced to be held in the Temple of Victory (Sulpice) in commemoration of our ancestors.) "Young lady," continued the good man, "do not assume that air of displeasure; it is neither becoming your situation nor mine. Rather thank me for the solicitude I feel for my spiritual child, for such you are, my daughter; and it grieves me to think that you may be deceived. Why should your civil marriage take place in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine? Why are the bans not published at the church? Why is a nocturnal celebration demanded? The ceremony before the mayor will take place by day, but where? at the extremity of Paris! in an obscure quarter, where, truly, a former Madame Junot is not very likely to suspect that a successor is being installed in her rights; all this has an ambiguous appearance, and I shall not make myself a party to its execution."

It was equally vain to reason or petition; the Abbé turned a deaf ear to all I could say, and I was obliged to depart without the consolation of knowing that the good father would sanction my marriage with his presence; his blessing he gave me, and prayed that his presentiment might prove unfounded.

I pressed upon him at my departure a purse containing a hand-

some sum of money, which my brother had given me for that purpose; I knew that the Abbé was very poor, and almost destitute of necessaries; I saw in the garret where he lived neither fire nor wood, and the weather was already becoming cold; he resisted, however, the offer repeatedly, and even with discontent. I would not listen to the refusal, but left the purse, saying, that what he could spare from his own comforts, he might distribute as my almoner.

The Abbé Lusthier was one of those characters which the continual agitation of our time does not produce; then, in his party, as in ours, there were men of sincerity, who were ready even to sacrifice their lives in the cause to which, from principle or prejudice, they were attached. La Vendée had its martyrs to loyalty, as we had our martyrs to that holy and noble liberty so often condemned to death, but which cannot perish because it is immortal. At this time political good faith was to be found in all ranks; with truth may it be said that this has passed away. This poor man, who had been a soldier, and was now a priest, had testified his loyalty to the throne and altar by his personal as well as pecuniary sufferings; he had obtained a dispensation for officiating in his sacred functions, notwithstanding the severe mutilation of his left hand. He lodged at this time in the house of a cartwright in the Rue Pépinière, and was frequently obliged to change his residence to avoid observation; because, though not absolutely denounced, he was compromised in the confessions of the Chouans. He was, perhaps, a fanatic, but he was sincere. He lay upon ashes, and lived upon roots; he prayed for the happiness of France; but he would have France happy in his own sense of the word. He was, however, a man of sense, and certainly in speaking to me of his apprehensions respecting General Junot, he only expressed what he felt. He was really alarmed, for he saw in Junot only a man of *La Nouvelle France*—of our young France, valiant and glorious, which has taken its degrees in characters of blood, the blood of its sons. He could not comprehend that devotedness to the soil of the country, by which those sons had illustrated their names. He only saw a creation of tempests and storms in this young man, who at twenty-seven years of age had attained an elevated rank, by means of glorious deeds, and a valour attested by numerous cicatrices.

Junot never heard of this little scene till it was related to him some years afterwards, with the greatest frankness, by the Abbé Lusthier himself, on occasion of his calling to request my husband to obtain for him the living of Virginie, a little village near Bièvre. "I hope your fears on my account are now at an end," said Junot smiling, and offering his hand to him. "I assure you, you have no occasion to

retain any; and to prove it I shall request Citizen Portalis to appoint you to a different benefice from the one you have solicited. I know from my wife, that your fortune does not correspond either with your merit or your charity, and it is my duty, if possible, to repair the injustice of fate; and I hope, at the same time," added he laughing, "to prove that I am innocent; for I would not silence by an obligation any person who is entitled to reproach me."

The Abbé Lusthier not only accepted General Junot's offers, but attached himself unreservedly to him. He obtained for him an excellent living in the diocese of my uncle, the bishop of Metz, and was some time afterwards appointed grand vicar to his friend the Abbé Bernier, Bishop of Orleans.

But to recur to the interesting period from which this episode has led me. On my return home, I related all that had passed, which excited my mother's displeasure. "I hope," said she, "you did not leave him the purse." I looked at her instead of answering. On meeting my eyes she laughed, half angrily and half in jest, and said, "So, I am a simpleton! And you did leave him the purse, did you not?"—"Certainly," I replied, embracing her. "And you know very well that each piece of silver which we have given the Abbé Lusthier, will acquire the value of gold in his hands." Albert then went out to find the curate of the church of the Capuchins, gave him the necessary instructions, and received his promise to be ready at five minutes past midnight.

At nine o'clock in the morning my toilette was commenced, in which I was to appear before the mayor. I wore an Indian muslin gown, with a train, high body and long sleeves, that buttoned at the wrist, and which were then called *amadis*, the whole was trimmed with magnificent point lace. My cap, made by Mademoiselle Despaux, was of Brussels point crowned with a wreath of orange flowers, from which descended to my feet a veil of fine English point, large enough to envelope my person. This costume, which was adopted by all young brides, differing only according to the degree of wealth of the parties, was in my opinion much more elegant than the present bridal fashion. I do not think that it is prejudice for the past which makes me prefer my own wedding-dress—that profusion of rich lace, so fine, and so delicate, that it resembled a vapoury net-work shading my countenance, and playing with the curls of my hair—those undulating folds of my robe, which fell round my person with the inimitable grace and supple ease of the superb tissues of India—that long veil, which in part covered the form without concealing it, to the robe of tulle of our modern brides, made in the fashion of a ball-dress, the shoulders and

bosom uncovered, and the petticoat short enough to permit every one to judge not only of the delicacy of the little foot, but of the shape of the ankle and leg,* while the head, dressed as for a ball, scarcely covered by a veil of stiff and massy tulle, the folds of which fall without ease or grace around the lengthened waist and shortened petticoat of the young bride; no, this is not elegance.

At eleven o'clock the General arrived, with the rest of his family. His mother had preceded him by half an hour, and during that short time had acquired rights on my filial tenderness and respect, which to her death she shared with my mother, and which I still feel for her memory. This excellent woman had seen me but twice; but she had made a correct estimate of the mutual tenderness which subsisted between my mother and myself. Her perfect goodness of heart and excellent judgment had inspired the thought of placing herself between us at the moment of a separation, which she foresaw would be so painful. Alas! she knew at that moment better than I did what were my poor mother's feelings; and I was far from understanding the full force of the words, which with tears that could not be restrained, she addressed to her, "I will supply your place to her!"

The General brought with him his father, his brother, Madame Junot his sister-in-law, Madame Maldan his youngest sister, and two of his aides-de-camp, of whom General Lallemand, then a captain, has rendered his name celebrated by the honour and fidelity of his conduct. General Junot had him attached to his staff in Egypt, where he served in the fine regiment of chasseurs of the General-in-chief; Junot had a high esteem for him. The other officer was M. Bardin, son of an estimable painter, and himself a very worthy man. He had wit, wrote pretty verses with ease, drew admirably, and had on this occasion laid all his talents under contribution for his General's service. These two gentlemen were the General's witnesses; mine were, the Count of Villemanzy, Peer of France, who has been dead two years, an intimate friend of my father, and M. Lequien de Bois-Cressy. M. Brunetière, who had been my guardian, now acted as my father, together with Albert and my uncle Prince Demetrius Comnenus, who had arrived two days previously from Munich.

* Prince Talleyrand began life by saying what are called "witty things." Being one day present at the Tuileries, when several ladies were to take an oath of fidelity between the hands of the Emperor on their new appointments, he particularly noticed the beautiful Madame de Marmier who wore remarkable short petticoats in order to show the delicacy of her feet and ankle. Some one present asked Talleyrand what he thought of the *tout ensemble:* "I think," said the witty minister, "that her dress is too short to take an oath of fidelity."

When we set out for the Rue de Jouy, the Rue de Saint Croix near our house was filled with people, mostly strangers in our quarter; and among them nearly all the principal *Marchandes de la Halle.* Junot was extremely considerate for the people of Paris, and was very popular with them; and I am convinced that in a commotion the mere sight of him would have restored tranquillity; he was very benevolent to them, giving alms to a very great extent. He could, moreover, speak the language of the *Dames de la Halle* admirably, when any advantage was to be gained by it.

Four of the group requested permission to pay their compliments to me. It was granted, and they entered the saloon, carrying each a bouquet, certainly larger than myself, and composed of the finest and rarest flowers, the price of which was greatly enhanced by the lateness of the season. They offered them to me with no other phrase than the following: "Mam'zelle, you are about to become the wife of our Commandant, and we are glad of it; because you are said to be kind and good. Will you permit us?" And the two women embraced me heartily. Junot ordered some refreshments to all those who had been good enough, he said, to remember him on the happiest day of his life. We set out for the Municipality amidst their loud acclamations and the repeated cries of "Long live the Bride and Bridegroom!"

On arriving at the Mayoralty of the Rue de Jouy, Faubourg Saint Antoine, where it was Junot's whim to be married, not, as the Abbé Lusthier supposed, to be less in sight, for in this case he would have contrived his matters very ill, but to gratify a friend; we were received and married by M. Duquesnoy, mayor of this arrondissement. He spared us the ennui of a long discourse, and only addressed to us a few well-chosen words, which I have never forgotten.

We returned to my mother's, and the day passed off much as all similar days do. When the hour of midnight struck, we crossed over to the court, and at one by the clock of the legislative body, I entered the Hôtel de Montesquieu, to the sound of the most harmonious music.

CHAPTER XLVI.

A grand dinner at my mother's the day after my marriage—Junot's friends and the rest of the party, a curious assemblage—Their characters and portraits—General Lannes the Roland of the Army—Duroc—Bessières—Eugène Beauharnais—Rapp—Berthier—Marmont, the best friend of Junot—Lavalette—His marriage—The divorce—The negro and the Canoness—Madame Lavalette's beauty and the ravages of the small-pox—The Bonaparte family—Madame Bacciochi in the costume of a literary society of ladies.

Junot was much attached to his comrades; all who had been connected with him in the army of Italy or the army of Egypt had special claims upon his friendship, and he was desirous of giving a dinner the day after his marriage to eight or ten of his brethren in arms. My mother, who was always anxious to make him adopt what she called refined habits, vainly remonstrated, that this would be a defiance of etiquette; that it would resemble a journeyman carpenter giving his companions a treat on his wedding holiday. Junot was firm, and my mother's only resource was to invite his friends herself.

"But will they come to me without an introduction?" she inquired. Junot assured her that they would; and invitations were sent to Bessières, Lannes, Eugène Beauharnais, Rapp, and some others. Some of Junot's friends, Belliard, Desgenettes, etc., were not yet returned from Egypt; but those who were in Paris all met at my mother's table.

This dinner was extremely curious because it was a reunion of all parties. My mother's friends sat down beside the whole family of Bonaparte, and the new guests made a very interesting accession to the party. At this time I knew none of the above-mentioned friends of Junot; I had distinguished their names amid the acclamations of the people, when news of some fresh triumphs arrived; but I was acquainted with no Generals except Moreau, Macdonald, and Buernonville, whom we had frequently met at Madame Leclerc's. It afforded me then great satisfaction to be introduced to those men who had seconded Bonaparte, and had been to him at once good comrades, and good labourers in the erection of that edifice of glory under which France now found an asylum from her distractions.

General Lannes was also lately married. He had been more diligent than Junot, and had been for three weeks the husband of Mademoiselle Louise Gheneuc, a young person of exquisite beauty. Lannes was then twenty-eight years of age, five feet five or six inches high, slender and elegant, his feet, legs, and hands, being remarkable for their symmetry. His face was not handsome, but it was expressive; and when his voice pronounced one of those military thoughts which had acquired for him the appellation of the Roland of the army, "his eyes," said Junot, "which now appear so small, become immense, and dart flashes of lightning." Junot also told me that he looked upon Lannes as, without exception, the bravest man of the army, because his courage, invariably the same, neither received accession or suffered diminution from any of those incidents which usually influence military men. The same coolness with which he re-entered his tent, he carried into the midst of the battle, the hottest fire, and the most difficult emergencies. To this invaluable advantage Junot considered him to possess the most rapid coup-d'œil and conception, and the most accurate judgment, of any person he had ever met with, except the First Consul. He was, besides, amiable, faithful in friendship, and a good patriot; he possessed a heart truly French; a heart of the best days of the glorious Republic. One curious trait in his character was, the obstinacy with which he refused to have his hair cut short. In vain the First Consul begged, entreated him to cut it off; he still retained a short and thick cue, full of powder and pomatum. This mania nearly embroiled him with Junot, notwithstanding their friendship, on account of the latter having cropped the hair of the famous division of Arras, and in consequence the fashion became general throughout the whole army.

Duroc was next to Lannes in Junot's estimation, and was a year younger than him; his person was about the same stature, but with a superiority of manner and figure; his hair was black, his nose, chin, and cheeks, were too round to admit of his features being at all striking, which even cast a shade of indecision over his countenance. His eyes were large and black, but set so high in his head, that they did not harmonize with his smile or any other expression, from which singular effect, those who were not partial to him, averred that he was not frank; but I, who was his intimate friend, who knew his heart perhaps better than any other person, can affirm that it was all openness and goodness. Our friendship, which commenced in 1801, and closed only with his life, was that of a brother and sister. Peculiar circumstances made me his confidant, at first against his will, but afterwards with his entire acquiescence, in a case which must influence

the happiness of his life, and which turned out unfortunate. Numerous letters from him, which I still possess, written from all countries, certify that it was long ere he recovered his equanimity, and still longer before he could pardon those who, with one stroke, had given a mortal wound to his moral and political existence.

Bonaparte, who was a good judge of men, distinguished him from his companions, and sent him to execute difficult missions in foreign courts; this showed that he understood Duroc's capabilities. I have a letter of his dated from Petersburg, in 1802, in which he mentions the too flattering estimation he was there held in; the Emperor Alexander, when he visited me in 1814, spoke of many persons whom Napoleon had sent to him, and his opinion of Duroc was still the same as it had been described twelve years before. This is not the place to notice posterior facts, but I cannot forbear remarking, that I shall throughout have frequent occasion to prove, that, far from being ungrateful towards Bonaparte, as M. de Bourrienne has inconsiderately advanced, Duroc was always amongst the most devoted of his adherents.

Bessières, at that time a colonel, was amongst Junot's intimate friends. I always deplored the cessation of this intimacy, for the most futile and ridiculous cause imaginable; and being frequently called upon to give judgment between them, I must confess, that I could not always think Junot in the right. Bessières, who was about the same age, was a stouter man than Lannes; like him, he was from the South, as the accent of both sufficiently testified, and like him he had a mania for powder, but with a striking difference in the cut of his hair; a small lock at each side, projected like little dog's ears, and his long and thin Prussian cue supplied the place of the *Cadogan* of Lannes. He had good teeth, a slight cast in the eye, but not to a disagreeable extent; and a rather prepossessing address. He was then Colonel of the *Guides*, that is to say, of the *Chasseurs à cheval* of the Consular guard, jointly with Eugène Beauharnais.

Eugène was yet but a child; but already gave promise of being what he afterwards became, a most charming and amiable young man. With the exception of his teeth, which, like his mother's, were frightful, his person was perfectly attractive and elegant. Frankness and hilarity pervaded all his actions; he laughed like a child, but never in bad taste. He was good-natured, gracious, polite without being obsequious, and mimic without being impertinent, which is a rare talent. He performed well in comedy, sang a good song, and danced like his father, who had derived a surname from his excellence in this art; in fine, he was a truly agreeable young man. He made a conquest of my mother, whom he wished to please, and completely

succeeded. Beauharnais, the father, who was called the *beau danseur*, though well born, was not of a rank to ride in the king's carriages; and Josephine, his wife, was never persented. He alone was invited on account of his dancing, and frequently had the honour of being the Queen's partner.

Rapp was then, what he continued to be twenty years later, with the exception of a few additional wounds. It is true he had in vain passed through all the forms of courts, French and foreign, but with manners the most rough, ungraceful, and awkward, that ever belonged to a man of the world. But if in courts he never lost his rude, uncultivated exterior, so also he preserved pure and intact a disinterested soul and virtuous heart. Rapp was always esteemed and loved, because he deserved to be so.

Berthier was the one of Junot's friends with whom I had the greatest desire to become acquainted. I had seen him frequently at Madame Visconti's, but always in a hurry; and at this period the name of Berthier was so closely connected with that of Bonaparte, that in hearing him mentioned, the memory called up Parmenio, at least. Berthier was small and ill-shaped, without being actually deformed; his head was too large for his body; his hair neither light nor dark, was rather frizzed than curled; his forehead, eyes, nose, and chin, each in their proper place, were, however, by no means handsome in the aggregate. His hands, naturally ugly, became frightful by a habit of biting his nails; add to this, that he stammered much in speaking, and that if he did not make grimaces, the agitation of his features was so rapid as to occasion some amusement to those who did not take a direct interest in his dignity. So much for his person; he was the plainest of the three brothers; Cæsar was better looking than he, and Leopold still better than Cæsar. Madame d'Ogeranville, their sister, resembled Alexander Berthier. With respect to his mind, his heart, and that which we call understanding, I shall have occasion hereafter to notice the judgment I have formed of them; I must however add here, that he was an excellent man, with a thousand good qualities, neutralized by weakness. But I deny that Berthier deserves the character his biographers have given of him. He not only loved Napoleon, but he was much attached to several of his brother officers; and often braved the ill-humour of the Emperor, in speaking to him of such of his friends as had committed faults. Berthier was good in every acceptation of the word.

"The best and dearest of my friends," said Junot, after having presented his comrades separately to me, "is still in Italy; Marmont will soon return with his wife, to whom I shall introduce you, and

whose friendship I hope you will obtain, giving yours in return; he is a brother to me."

M. de Lavalette, another of my mother's guests on that day, was no bad representation of Bacchus; a lady might have been proud of his pretty little white hand, and red, well-turned nails; his two little eyes, and immoderately little nose, placed in the midst of a very fat pair of cheeks, gave to his countenance a truly comic expression, in aid of which came the extraordinary arrangement of his head; not the locks only, but the individual hairs might be counted, and they received distinguishing names from the wits of the staff—as the invincible, the redoubtable, the courageous; and one in particular, which defied the discipline of the comb or the hand, and pertinaciously stood upright, they called the indomptable.

But notwithstanding this personal appearance, and an address almost burlesque, Lavalette knew how to impose respect, and never suffered merriment to take unwarranted liberties with him. He had sense and wit; had seen much and retained much; and related multitudes of anecdotes with remarkable grace, resulting from a cast of ideas at once quiet, brilliant, and acute. M. de Lavalette was not, however, a superior man; the horrible and infamous prosecution of which he was the object, has placed him on an eminence which he would never otherwise have attained; but he had the essential qualities of a good father, a good husband, and a faithful friend.

He married a few days before his departure for Egypt, Mademoiselle Emilie de Beauharnais, daughter of the Marquis de Beauharnais, brother-in-law of Madame Bonaparte. This young lady, of extreme beauty, gentle, and thanks to Madame Bonaparte, her aunt, very well educated, had considerable difficulty in marrying, on account of the position of her parents. Her father obtained a divorce from his wife that he might marry a German canoness; and her mother married at the same time a negro. The poor abandoned child was fortunate in having attracted the affections of such a man as Lavalette, which she warmly returned. Her husband, however, had not reached Egypt before the bride took the natural smallpox, and scarcely escaping with her life, lost her beauty. She was in despair, and though by degrees the trace subsided, and the marks of the pustules became less evident; though her figure was still fine, her complexion dazzling, her teeth good, and her countenance pleasing, she could not reconcile herself to the change of which both before and after his return, she felt conscious that her husband must be sensible. The delicacy of his conduct never gave her reason for a moment to suppose that his attachment was in any way diminished; but her sighs and tears, her profound

melancholy, and weariness of life, showed that she could not overcome her own apprehensions; the good and excellent Lavalette had but one wish and that was that his wife should be happy.

Lucien, Minister of the Interior, could not be at my wedding dinner, but Madame Murat, though about to lie in, made an effort to join us. Madame Leclerc was in the height of her beauty. Madame Bacciochi was dressed on the occasion with a degree of eccentricity, which even now is fresh to my mind. She had presided in the morning over a female literary society; and proposing to establish a peculiar costume for the associates, she considered that the readiest way to effect her purpose, was to have a pattern made and appear in it herself, and in this new dress she afterwards came to my mother; such a medley of the Jewish, Roman, Middle Age and modern Greek costumes, of every thing, in short, except French good taste, was I think never seen. To see Madame Bacciochi thus attired, was not surprising, because we were accustomed to her singularities; but it was impossible to resist the ludicrous impression she created by declaring her intention of offering such a dress to the adoption of all good Christians.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The two parties brought together—Affected politeness, and concealed contempt—The visiting card—Rapp and M. de Caulaincourt—Tragi-comic scene—M. de Caulaincourt's tribulation—The duel prevented, and the reconciliation—General Lannes—Military manners—Powdered cues, and singular prepossession—Colonel Bessières and General Augereau.

A comic effect was produced by the unusual union of parties which took place on this occasion. On one side contempt was disguised under the appearance of extreme politeness, but combined with a hauteur which announced that this politeness was in deference to the mistress of the house; and an occasional smile, or whispered observation, betrayed the opinions of the ancient noblesse upon the manners of their new associates. Our good little papa, M. de Caulaincourt, was perhaps the only person of this class who was sincerely gay, and paid his compliments with the frankness of a soldier, combined with the elegance of a courtier; but an incident occurred, which for a time damped his cheerfulness.

He had known Rapp at the Tuileries, and it was not without

surprise that he recognised him in our society. Approaching me, he asked, in an under-tone, whether that great boy, pointing out Rapp, had paid his visit to my mother? I answered in the negative. "Then at least he has left his card?"—"No."—"But, my dear child, it is not possible, you must have been so absorbed in admiration of your *corbeille*, as not to have seen him; it is not credible that a man should come and sit down in the house of a woman of good society, and eat at her table, without having first been introduced, and paid his respects to her. As he was proceeding in a very animated tone, Rapp crept softly behind him, then hallooed into his ear: "What are you talking of, dear papa? please to move out of my way on a wedding-day; you know, the old must give way to the young;" and so saying, he threw his arms round the old gentleman's waist, lifted him gently from the ground, and set him down at a little distance.

M. de Caulaincourt's good nature made him generally beloved; but under it was concealed a strength of character known only to those who were much in his society: and such a circumstance as the present was calculated to show him off, as a high-bred French gentleman, in the true acceptation of the word. Looking at Rapp, with an expression of dignified severity, he said:

"Colonel! you and I are neither old enough, nor young enough for such play;" then bowing coldly to him, he offered me his arm, saying, "Will you come and see what is passing in the next room?"

The worthy man was agitated. I led him through my mother's room, which was filled with company, and made him sit down in mine, which my mother had converted into a second boudoir. Junot was surprised soon after to find me consoling my old friend, to whom I was endeavouring to represent that the matter did not deserve the serious turn he was disposed to give it. I repeated the whole to Junot, who, in spite of the old gentleman's opposition, for M. de Caulaincourt would by no means permit that he should seek apologies for him, went to remonstrate with Rapp, and in five minutes brought him to us, ready to fall on his knees to entreat pardon for the brutalities which Junot had assured him he had committed. "And Junot tells me also," he added, turning to me, "that I have failed in respect to you, in acting so rudely in your presence. I might, however, fully refuse to beg pardon, because apologies are only necessary when one has done wrong intentionally, and certainly I did not intend to offend."

It was impossible to forbear laughing at this quaint excuse, and M. de Caulaincourt, frankly holding out his hand, said to him, "You are a good fellow! and I shall be happy to become one of your friends." Rapp pressed the old gentleman's hand, with a very pretty little hand

of his own, not at all in consistence with his massive figure; and here ended an affair, from which my friend's high feelings of honour had threatened nothing less than a duel, except that my mother was so offended with Rapp, that she scarce ever spoke politely to him afterwards.

M. de Caulaincourt, dining at our house some days afterwards, requested an introduction to Lannes, who, of all the republican Generals, was the one who pleased him best. I passed my arm through his, and led him to the other end of the saloon, where Lannes was conversing with Junot. "General," said I, "permit me to present to you M. de Caulaincourt, an ancient and distinguished general officer, who wishes to be acquainted with you."

The pleasing countenance of Lannes was immediately illuminated with a cordial smile, and shaking him roughly by the arm, he said: "Ah, my old friend! I like the ancients; there is always something to be learnt from them. To what branch of the service did you belong? Were you biped or quadruped?—or, Ah! *Diable;* I believe you are at present attached to the Royal Phlegmatics."* The fact was, that, astonished at Lannes's reception, and the rolling artillery which at that time made a copious part of his vocabulary, M. de Caulaincourt had been seized with a severe fit of coughing, which he could not stifle.

"Ah! what is the matter?" said the General, patting him upon the back as we do a choking child, "why this is an infirmity that requires reform, Junot; you must make Lassalle enroll him." Lassalle then commanded the veterans of the garrison of Paris, but was no relation to the famous general of the same name. The good old gentleman scarcely knew whether to laugh or to be angry. Meanwhile Junot whispered a word to the General; who, suddenly changing his tone, said, with an expression almost respectful, "What, are you the father of those two brave young men, one of whom, notwithstanding his early age, is colonel of a regiment of carabineers? Then you must be brave yourself!—you have educated them for the country, and you have not, like too many of your class, sold them to foreigners. You must be a good man; I must embrace you." And so saying, he threw his arms round him, and embraced him heartily.

We left the two comrades to resume the conversation we had interrupted, and we went to rejoin my mother in an adjoining saloon. "What do you think of General Lannes?" said I. "Oh! very well!

* The expression "*royal pituits,*" is much more ridiculous in French, than it can possibly be rendered in our language.

very well. But I expected a different kind of man; for example, he swears like a renegado, it makes one tremble. To be sure, he may be a good soldier and a brave man, for all that."—"And what more could you expect in General Lannes, than a soldier distinguished by his valour and his skill in beating the enemy?"—"Why, my dear child, what could I think? It was the fashion of dressing his hair that deceived me. I thought if a man knew how to dress himself, he must have something of the manners of other times; how could I think otherwise?"

This naïve confession stupified me. "Is it possible then," said I, "that you have judged a man only by his cue? You were very fortunate in not having encountered General Augereau, in whom you would have found yourself much more mistaken." At this moment a great man passed us, and saluted me with that expression of respect which is found only in well-educated persons. "And who is that?" said M. de Caulaincourt, "he is powdered too I think." "It is Colonel Bessières; shall I introduce him to you, my little papa?" "No, no," said he hastily; "I have had enough of introductions for once."

It was in vain I assured him that Bessières left his oaths in the barracks; he felt no inclination for the experiment; but when, some time afterwards, he met General Augereau, he remembered my words, and had full opportunity of proving their truth. The General surpassed even himself in swearing, and my poor friend, in relating the conversation he had had with General Fructidor, as he called him, could not find words to express the astonishment he felt at the language he had heard.

From this time he had such an apprehension of cues and powder, that he was very near cutting off his own; but this temptation was temporary, as may be imagined. He contented himself with no longer trusting all the *Cadogans* he met.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

My presentation to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte—The Court of the Tuileries and the Empress's entrance—Duroc and Rapp on the steps—Eleven o'clock—Politeness of Eugène de Beauharnais—The yellow saloon—Gracious reception by Madame Bonaparte—Amiability of Hortense—Conversation with the First Consul—Bonaparte's opinion of Mirabeau—The rouge and the tribunes—M. de Cobentzel and singular reserve of Bonaparte—Wit of Bonaparte upon the society of the Faubourg Saint-Germain—Portrait of Mademoiselle de Beauharnais.

The following day I was to be presented to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte. It was a great affair for my mother; she occupied herself upon my toilette with more minute care than I imagine she had ever bestowed upon her own in the highest tide of her vanity. One thing disturbed her much; there was no etiquette, no ceremonial. "Nevertheless, he affects the little king," said my mother. The truth was, that at this time the interior of the First Consul's family was like that of a very rich man, with no more forms; Madame Bonaparte had not even yet ladies in waiting.

We went to the Tuileries after the opera, leaving the ballet of Psyché in the middle, that we might not be too late, and arrived at ten o'clock. My heart beat as we alighted at the pavilion of Flora, at the door which precedes that in the angle so long called the entrance of the Empress. As we ascended the five or six steps before the door on the left, leading to the apartments of the ground-floor, we met Duroc and Rapp. "How late you are!" said Duroc. "It is near eleven o'clock."—"Ah!" added the brave Alsatian, "Madame Junot is a worker of marvels; she is about to make an infidel of our good Junot." And he burst into a loud laugh.

I was desirous of turning back; but Junot replied, "Madame Bonaparte desired me to come here after the opera."—"Oh!" said Duroc, "it is quite a different thing if Madame Bonaparte has appointed the hour."

At this moment the folding door of Madame Bonaparte's apartment opened, and Eugène de Beauharnais ran down. He was sent by his mother, because, having heard the wheels of a carriage within the court, and finding that no one came up, she began to fear, least by

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mistake, arising from the lateness of the hour, I might be told she could not receive me. I was sensible of this attention, and the more so, as the messenger was himself very fit to dispel apprehensions of a doubtful reception. M. de Beauharnais gave me his arm, and we entered the large saloon together. This fine apartment was so obscure, that at first entering I saw no one in it; for it was lighted only by two chandeliers placed on the mantelpiece, and surrounded with gauze to soften the glare. I was much agitated on entering: but an observation from Eugène de Beauharnais, contributed wonderfully to restore my composure. You have nothing to fear," said he; "my mother and sister are so kind!" These words made me start; no doubt I might experience that emotion which a young woman is so liable to feel at a first presentation to strangers, especially when she has some reason to imagine that she may not be very cordially received: but my spirits recovered surprisingly.

Madame Bonaparte was in the same place which she then occupied as mistress of the house, and where afterwards she was seated as sovereign of the world; I found her before a tapestry frame, prosecuting a work, three-fourths of which was performed by Mademoiselle Dubuquoy, whose ingenious hint that Marie-Antoinette was fond of such employments, had inspired Josephine's inclination for them. At the other side of the chimney sat Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais, an amiable, mild, agreeable girl; with the figure of a nymph, and beautiful light hair. Her gracious manners and gentle words were irresistibly pleasing.

The First Consul was standing before the chimney with his hands behind him, fidgeting as he had already the habit of doing; his eyes were fixed upon me, and as soon as I recovered my self-possession I found that he was closely examining me; but from that moment I determined not to be abashed, as to allow myself to be overcome by fantastic fears with such a man, would be ruin.

Madame Bonaparte stood up, came forward, took my two hands and embraced me, saying that I might depend upon her friendship. "I have been too long Junot's friend," she continued, "not to entertain the same sentiments for his wife, particularly for the one he has chosen."—"Oh! oh! Josephine," said the First Consul, "that is running on very fast! How do you know that this little pickle is worth loving? Well, Mademoiselle Loulou (you see I do not forget the names of my old friends), have you not a word for me?"

He had taken my hand, and drawing me towards him, looked at me with a scrutiny which for a moment made me cast down my eyes; but I recollected myself immediately; "General," I replied smiling,

"it is not for me to speak first." The slight bend of his brow would have been imperceptible to any other person; but I knew his countenance well: he smiled almost instantly, and said, "Very well parried. Oh! the mother's spirit. Apropos, how is Madame Permon?"—"Ill, General. She suffers much; for two years past her health has altered so seriously as to cause us great uneasiness."—"Indeed! so bad as that; I am sorry to hear it, very sorry; make my regards to her. It is a wrong head—a devil of a spirit;* but she has a generous heart and a noble soul."

I withdrew my hand, which he had held during this short colloquy, and took my seat near Madame Bonaparte. The conversation became general, and very agreeable. Duroc came in, and took part in it. Madame Bonaparte said little on subjects she did not understand, and thereby avoided exposing her ignorance. Her daughter, without saying more than is becoming in a young girl, had the talent of sustaining the conversation on agreeable topics. The events at this moment passed in rapid succession, and afforded large matter of conversation. M. de Cobentzel was expected at Paris; his arrival was spoken of, but without any relation to politics. Madame Bonaparte said that she had heard some one observe upon the astonishing resemblance between Count Louis de Cobentzel and Mirabeau. "Who said that?" asked the First Consul, hastily. "I do not exactly recollect. Barras, I think." "And where had Barras seen M. de Cobentzel? Mirabeau! —he was ugly: M. de Cobentzel is ugly—there is all the resemblance. *Eh, pardieu!* you know him, Junot; you were with him at our famous treaty, and Duroc too. But you never saw Mirabeau. He was a rogue, but a clever rogue! he himself did more mischief to the former masters of this house, than the States-general altogether. But he was a rogue." Here he took a pinch of snuff, repeating, "He was a bad man, and too vicious to be tribune of the people; not but in my tribunate there were some no better than he, and without half his talent. As for Count Louis de Cobentzel—"

He took another pinch of snuff, and was about to resume his observations, but stopped as if struck by a sudden reflection. He thought, perhaps, that the first magistrate of the republic should not so lightly give his opinion upon a man just named by a great power to treat with him. He stopped then with a sentence half uttered, and turning to me, said,

"I hope that we shall often see you, Madame Junot. My intention

* I have already said that I shall preserve the turn of Napoleon's phrases, and his manner of speaking; it was original; and at once oriental and *bourgeoise*.

is to draw around me a numerous family, consisting of my Generals and their young wives. They will be friends of my wife and of Hortense, as their husbands are mine. Does that suit you? I warn you that you will be disappointed if you expect to find here your fine acquaintances of the Faubourg Saint-Germain. I do not like them. They are my enemies, and prove it by defaming me. Tell them from me, as your mother lives amongst them—tell them, that I am not afraid of them." This sentence, spoken with harshness, gave me uneasiness from two causes: it was disobliging both to Junot and to me; it seemed to reproach him for taking a wife from a hostile society, and to hint that I came into his own with unfriendly dispositions. I could not forbear answering, perhaps hastily,

"General, excuse me if I cannot consent to do what is not in the province of a woman, and particularly in that of General Junot's wife; and permit me to carry from you to my friends only messages of peace and union; I know that they desire no others." And this was true. I would not interrupt the relation of this interesting interview to describe the person and manners of Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, but I think it would be an injustice both to her and my readers to omit to describe her such as she appeared at my first introduction to her.

Hortense de Beauharnais was at this time seventeen years old; she was fresh as a rose, and though her fair complexion was not relieved by much colour, she had enough to produce that freshness and bloom which was her chief beauty; a profusion of light hair played in silky locks round her soft and penetrating blue eyes. The delicate roundness of her figure, slender as a palm-tree, was set off by the elegant carriage of her head; her feet were small and pretty, her hands very white, with pink, well-rounded nails. But what formed the chief attraction of Hortense was the grace and suavity of her manners, which united the creole dullness with the vivacity of France. She was gay, gentle, and amiable; she had wit, which, without the smallest ill-temper, had just malice enough to be amusing. A polished and well-conducted education had improved her natural talents; she drew excellently, sang harmoniously, and performed admirably in comedy. In 1800 she was a charming young girl; she afterwards became one of the most amiable princesses of Europe. I have seen many, both in their own courts and in Paris, but I never knew one who had any pretensions to equal talents. She was beloved by every one, though of all who surrounded her, her mother seemed to be the least conscious of her attractions; I do not mean to say that she did not love her, but certainly she did not express that degree of maternal

affection which Hortense de Beauharnais merited. Her brother loved her tenderly; the First Consul looked upon her as his child; and it was only in that country so fertile in the inventions of scandal, that so foolish an accusation could have been imagined, as that any feeling less pure than paternal affection actuated his conduct towards her. The vile calumny met with the contempt it merited, and is now only remembered to be confuted.

CHAPTER XLIX.

The wedding-ball—List of guests—Swearing—Invitation to the First Consul—His visiting-cards—Diplomatic breakfast—Visit to the Tuileries, and invitation to Madame Bonaparte—The Monaco and *les deux Cogs*—The First Consul's closet—Charm of his physiognomy—The First Consul accepts an invitation to the ball—The first anniversary of the 18th of Brumaire, and the ball deferred—M. de Caulaincourt's indiscretion.

My mother had determined to give a ball on the 15th day after my marriage; it was an ancient custom, and though not now the fashion, she would by no means forego it. One evening when we had dined with her, she required our assistance in arranging her plans: "For this ball," said she, "must be one of the prettiest that has been given this long time past; my house, it is true, is very small, but it must be turned into an enchanted parterre of flowers. Come, take your place at the desk, Madame Laurette, and make out our list of invitations, for all your husband's friends must be of the party." Junot thanked her, and kissed her hand. "Oh! surely," she replied; "your friends are my friends now, only they swear rather too much: and you, I have been told, can do so too when you are angry; you must leave off that ugly habit, it does not become a gentleman."—Junot laughed, and held up his finger to me. "What, because she tells me that you swear," said my mother. "No, I hope she will never cease to pour all her confidence into my maternal ear; besides, remember, she has not yet made acquaintance enough with your ear for it to supplant mine; but come, to work."

Junot took the pen, and wrote down all the names of the ladies, beginning with Madame Bonaparte and Mademoiselle de Beauharnais. He then waited for the name with which my mother would commence the list of gentlemen.

"The First Consul of the French republic, one and indivisible; is

not that the style?" said my mother. "The First Consul!" we all exclaimed together. "Yes, the First Consul; is there any thing astonishing in that? I am tired of being on bad terms with any one, and besides—" "And besides," said Junot, laughing, "you think that perhaps you were more in the wrong than he."

"No, no," said my mother, "that is quite another affair. He was in the wrong altogether; but I considered, that as Laurette might be daily in his society, these sort of quarrels might produce disagreeable effects for her, and I wished to prevent that—was I not right?" We embraced her. "But the invitation," she added, "is not all; do you think he will accept it? do you think he will come?"—"I am sure of it; only name the hour that will suit you best, and I will come to fetch you," said Junot, enchanted at this prospect of reconciliation between his mother-in-law and his beloved General.

My mother looked at him with an air of astonishment, perfectly laughable—"Fetch me! to go where?"—"Where!" returned Junot, as much surprised in his turn; "to the Tuileries, to tender your invitation to the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte."—"My dear Junot," said my mother, with the utmost seriousness and sang-froid, "you are quite, nay, perfectly mad."—"It seems to me that what I say is, nevertheless, very sensible; that nothing, in fact, can be more reasonable," replied Junot, somewhat disconcerted by the apostrophe. —"And I tell you, you are mad. Would you have me go to request General Bonaparte to come again to my house, after having forbidden his appearance there?"

"How, then, do you propose to invite him?" asked Junot, with an accent impossible to describe. "Truly, how should I invite him? but precisely in the same manner as I do every one else, except that the card shall be all in writing, and I will write it all in my own neat hand, which he knows perfectly well."

Junot strode up and down the room, exclaiming, "But that cannot be! You had better not invite him at all! He will think that you intend him a disrespect."—"He would be much mistaken then. But he would think no such thing; and you will see, that after having received my note of invitation, he will do as all well-bred men would; he will call on me before the ball, or at least he will have a card left at the door."—"Do you think, then," said Junot, in the utmost surprise, "that he keeps visiting cards?"—"And why not? My dear child, because Bonaparte gains battles, is that any reason that he should not visit?"

For a long time my inclination to laugh had been suppressed with the utmost difficulty; Albert, throwing himself back in his arm-chair,

Junot now made a sign to us to take leave; we accordingly made our parting salutations, and the First Consul, after pressing my brother's hand with as much cordiality as if we were still in my father's house, inquired on what day this ball should take place. "Next Monday, General; it is, I believe, the 10th of November."

"What! the 10th of November," said the First Consul, going to his scrutoire; "that seems to me to be some particular day; let me see:" and as he spoke, he found the calendar he was seeking. "I thought so," he added, on consulting it. "The 10th of November is the anniversary of the 18th Brumaire, and I cannot join a party on that day. Your mother will have no company; your acquaintance of the Faubourg Saint-Germain will certainly not quit their retreats to make a festival of the anniversary of the re-establishment of the Republic. What concerns me personally," and his countenance as he spoke assumed an expression serious and severe, "is of little consequence, but I must see the Republic respected; it would not, therefore, be suitable that the anniversary of the day which restored it to us entire, should be celebrated otherwise than as a family festival. I do not refuse Madame Permon's invitation if you will name another day."

The change was immediately resolved upon, and he himself named the 12th of November. "Do you receive Josephine?" he inquired. I answered, that Madame Bonaparte had accepted for herself and her daughter the invitation which my mother, to her great regret, had not been able to give in person.

"Oh! I have no doubt but Madame Permon is ill," said the First Consul; "but there is idleness, if not some other motive, which I will not mention in her absence. Is there not, Madame Loulou?" And so saying, he pulled my ear and hair till he made my eyes water, which I was not sorry for, as it furnished an excuse for not answering this blunt interpolation, and for the colour which flushed my cheeks. While this was passing between us and the future master of the world a good scene took place in the apartments of Madame Bonaparte below stairs.

M. de Caulaincourt paid his court very attentively to Madame Bonaparte; an old friendship or relationship between them, was connected with a remembrance of protection of his part, and of gratitude on hers. She was, in consequence, on very good terms with my little papa, and almost every morning, the pony, with its velvet saddle and gilded bridle, trotted from the Rue des Capuchins to the Tuileries. Here it arrived on the morning of our visit, just as we had left Madame Bonaparte, and the conversation naturally falling upon the invitation we had brought, M. de Caulaincourt, to whom my mother

had related all that had passed on the preceding night, glorying in the firm stand she had made in favour of a written invitation, unceremoniously accused me of having mistaken my instructions, and very innocently repeated to Madame Bonaparte all that he had learned from my mother, of whose plans he perfectly approved. This unlucky incident produced a rather awkward denouement on our return to the saloon; but our apologies were graciously accepted, and whether or not the truth ever reached the ears of the First Consul, it produced no visible result.

My mother easily perceived that it would be ridiculous for her to celebrate the anniversary of the 18th Brumaire; the change which we had made in the day, consequently received her perfect acquiescence, and passed off without any observation.

CHAPTER L.

The ball and the flowers—The first country-dance—Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, Mademoiselle de Perigord, Mademoiselle de Caseaux, and myself—The minuet de la Reine and the gavotte—The fine dancers—Madame Leclerc and the toilet of Madame Bonaparte—Noise of horses, and the arrival of the First Consul—The dance interrupted—The First Consul's gray great-coat—Long conversation between the First Consul and M. de Talleyrand—M. Laffitte and the three-cornered hat—M. de Trénis and the grand bow—The First Consul listening to a dancing-lesson—Bonaparte not fond of long speeches—Interesting conversation between Bonaparte and my mother—Jerome, his debts, his beard and superfluous travelling case.

All was preparation in my mother's house for the expected ball, which she intended should be one of the most agreeable to be given this year in Paris. Our friends also looked forward to it with much impatience. My mother had already refused the request of above forty men and twelve women for tickets. She was delighted when such requests were made to her. The arrangements for ornamenting the house were perfect; and when at length all the trees, plants, and flowers assumed the places her taste appointed them, and innumerable lights shone among them from lamps of every colour, the staircase and hall perfectly resembled an enchanted palace.

Madame Bonaparte arrived about nine o'clock, accompanied by her son and daughter, and led by Colonel Rapp. My mother met her in the middle of the dining-room, the other ladies she received at the

door of the saloon. She was polite and gracious to every one, as she so well knew how to be. She conducted Madame Bonaparte to the arm-chair on the right of the fire-place, and begged her, with the hospitable grace of the South, to make herself perfectly at home. She must have appeared to her, what she actually was, a very agreeable and charming woman.

My mother was, perhaps, the prettiest woman in the room, after the First Consul's two sisters. She had been for some time in better health, and the respite from suffering had restored to her features that harmony and regularity in which her beauty consisted. She wore on this evening a dress, made by Madame Germon, of white crape, trimmed with bunches of double jonquils. Its form was Grecian, folding over the bosom, and fastened on the shoulders with two diamond clasps. Her head-dress had a degree of eccentricity in its composition which became her admirably. As she could not, or rather did not, choose to appear on the occasion of my marriage with her hair wholly uncovered, she had a toque of white crape (made by Leroi, who then lived in the Rue Des-Petits-Champs, and had already acquired some reputation), through the folds of which her fine black hair appeared, resembling velvet, intermingled with branches of jonquil, like those which trimmed her gown. The flowers were furnished by Madame Roux. She wore in her bosom a large bouquet of jonquils and natural violets, but exhibited neither necklace nor jewels of any kind except two very fine diamond drops in her ears. This attire was set off by a person whose elegance of figure and manner were at least her most striking ornament. I was proud of my mother.

At a quarter before nine o'clock Junot went to the Tuileries, to be ready to attend the First Consul to my mother's, but found him so overwhelmed with business that it was impossible for him to name the hour at which he could arrive; but he was desired to request as a favour that the dancing might commence, the First Consul giving his assurance that he would certainly come, however late he might be compelled to make his visit. The ball then was opened at half-past nine. Junot danced with Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, Eugène de Beauharnais with me, Hippolyte de Rastignac with Mademoiselle de Caseaux, and Mademoiselle de P—— with M. Dupaty. M. de Trénis was not yet arrived, nor M. Laffitte. These gentlemen were at this time in the extreme of every thing that is inconceivable; and to join a party, at two or three o'clock in the morning, was nothing extraordinary with them.

I had this evening, in the opinion of my mother and all our old

friends, an important duty to fulfil: it was to dance the *minuet de la cour* and the *gavotte*. For three weeks Gardel's long lessons had been renewed, that this minuet, which with my whole soul I detested, might be executed in perfection. I had entreated my mother to spare me this painful exhibition, but to no purpose. Not to dance the *minuet de la Reine* at a bridal ball, would have been a dereliction of all established customs, which she could not by any means sanction.

M. de Trénis belonged to our society: he was a worthy man, and far from meriting the character which he gave himself, of being nothing but a dancer. He possessed much information and some wit; natural good sense and a correct judgment, very capable of appreciating the ridiculous extravagance of his own words; that of his dress, though in the height of the fashion, was by no means so exaggerated. As of all the fine dancers of the day, he was the one with whom we were the most acquainted, I had engaged him to dance the *minuet de la cour* with me, hoping to be less timid with him than with MM. Laffitte or Dupaty.

At half-past ten, General Bonaparte was not arrived; every one else was, and the five rooms in my mother's suite of apartments were much more than conveniently crowded. All the Bonaparte family except Joseph, who, I believe, was then at Luneville, came early.

Madame Leclerc, always beautiful and elegant, had taken her seat at a distance from her sister-in-law, whose exquisite taste in dress never failed to put her out of conceit with her own appearance, how carefully soever her toilet had been performed. "I do not understand," said she to me, "how a person of forty years old can wear garlands of flowers!"

Madame Bonaparte had a wreath of poppies and golden ears of corn upon her head, and her dress was trimmed with the same. I was afraid that she would foolishly make the same compliment to my mother; and unwilling that a stupid remark should spoil the pleasure of the evening, I answered that my mother, who was older than Madame Bonaparte, had also flowers on her head and round her gown. Madame Leclerc looked at me with an air of astonishment; "But it is quite different, quite a different thing," said she.

At a few minutes before eleven, the trampling of the First Consul's horse-guards was heard. Very soon afterwards the carriage drove up to the door, and almost immediately he appeared at the entrance of the dining-room, with Albert and Junot, who had received him in the hall. My mother advanced towards him, and saluted him with her most courteous obeisance, to which he replied, with a smile,

"Eh! Madame Permon, is that how you receive an old friend?"

and held out his hand. My mother gave him hers, and they entered the ball-room together. The heat was excessive. The First Consul remarked it, but without taking off his gray great-coat; and was on the point of making the tour of the room, but his eagle eye had already observed that many of the ladies present had not risen at his entrance; he was offended, and passed immediately into the bedroom, still retaining my mother's arm, and appearing to look at her with admiration.

Dancing had been discontinued as soon as he appeared, and Bonaparte soon perceived it, by the stillness of the saloon, from whence issued only the murmuring sounds produced by the observations made upon him in an under tone.

"Pray, Madame Permon," said he, "let the dancing be resumed; young people must be amused, and dancing is their favourite pastime. I am told, by the by, that your daughter dances equal to Mademoiselle Chameroi.* I must see it. And if you will, you and I will dance the monaco, the only one I know."

"I have not danced these thirty years," replied my mother.

"Oh! you are jesting. You look to-night like your daughter's sister."

M. de Talleyrand was of the party. The First Consul, after having spoken to us all in the most agreeable manner, entered into a conversation with him in my mother's bedroom, which lasted without interruption for three-quarters of an hour. Towards midnight, he returned to the saloon, and appeared determined to make himself perfectly agreeable to every one.

How great soever my repugnance to dancing this unfortunate minuet, I had no choice but to answer to the summons of my mother, who, without concerning herself whether I was a maid or wife, expected me to be always obedient to her commands. At that time it was customary for young people to conduct themselves dutifully to their parents, not only from respect, but to avoid giving them pain. For a moment I thought myself safe. M. de Trénis was called for, but could nowhere be found. I went to tell my mother; but gained nothing. M. Laffitte was requested to supply his place. He had no hat; my mother soon found him one. All these difficulties removed, I at length went through the dreaded minuet, having whispered to Gardel not to allow the gavotte to be played; and reckoned my last courtesy a real

* Mademoiselle Chameroi was the finest dancer at the opera. At this period Eugène Beauharnais was attached to her. It was on the occasion of her funeral, that the singular history of the refusal of the curate of St. Roch to bury an actress took place. She died very young.

happiness. M. Laffitte was reconducting me to my seat, holding in one hand an enormous three-cornered hat, that he had borrowed of I know not whom, and leading me with the other, when we met M. de Trénis. He looked at me with so terrible an air, that I became uneasy for the consequences of having danced the minuet with another person. I told him mildly, that I had waited till past midnight, and that my mother had at length required that I should dance with M. Laffitte. "I hope, my dear sir, that you will forget this non-observance of my engagement, and particularly as your absence was its sole cause."

He acquiesced in his disappointment, and seating himself between my friend Mademoiselle de Merigny and myself, commenced a most ludicrous harangue upon the regret he experienced, which was the greater on account of my share in the loss; "for I shall never, never forget the spectacle I saw," added he. I was alarmed, and entreated an explanation, which, after listening to most highflown compliments on the excellence of my own dancing, I obtained at length in the following terms: "That you should dance a minuet with a man—a good dancer, no doubt; yes, he dances well, but if he dance a country-dance well—he never, never in his life, knew how to make the grand bow with the hat—he cannot make the grand bow."

Mademoiselle de Merigny and I could not help laughing. But M. de Trénis was too deep in his subject to attend to the cause of our merriment. "That seems to surprise you," he continued; "I can easily believe it. Not to know how to put on one's hat!—for that is the science—it is not difficult to explain—stay—give me leave." Then taking us both by the hand, he led us to my mother's room, where there were but few persons, and placing himself before the glass in the pier, hummed the close of the minuet air, and began the salute with the most perfect gravity, putting on his cocked-hat with all the effect so important an affair demanded. The laughing fit returned with redoubled force; but the comedy was not yet complete. Junot had joined us, and the First Consul, whose presence had not as yet caused us any constraint, on account of his close conversation with M. de Talleyrand, now stepped gently behind M. de Trénis to share the amusement with which this original was providing us. He made a sign to Junot to engage him to conversation, which was easy, if dancing were the subject; provided, however, that it were seriously treated. For he never laughed, he said, except the air of a country-dance was very gay, and then the orchestra compelled him to smile. "How do you agree with M. Laffitte?" said Junot, with as serious a countenance as he could command.

"Why," replied he, "as well as two men of talent can be supposed to agree when so nearly upon an equality. But he is an honest fellow, not at all envious of my success. It is true, that his own may well render him indulgent. His dance is lively and powerful. He has the advantage over me in the first eight measures of Panurge's gavotte. But in the jetés! oh! there he has no chance: he has nerve, but I have grace."

The First Consul opened his eyes and ears, altogether unaccustomed to such rant. "It is prodigious," said he at length: "this man is much more irrational than many who are confined in mad-houses. Is he a friend of yours?"

"Not exactly; but he is an intimate acquaintance; that is to say, we see him twice a week. But, except at a ball, he never talks of dancing, and can reason cleverly upon the manners of ancient Greece; it is a portion of history he has very much studied. He speaks several languages; and Albert says, is worth more than his reputation."

Bonaparte never listened to so long a discourse; I have learned that it never answered to make long speeches to him. He had returned to his place near M. Talleyrand; I saw by the direction of his eyes that he was speaking of M. de Trénis. He met my eyes fixed upon him, and called me to him, to make me a compliment on my mother's ball; his praises seemed almost a reproach. My mother had been perfectly polite to him; but it appeared to me that she should have been more cordial. I went to her, and, persuading her to walk with me, led her towards her own chamber, where I found the First Consul on the spot where I had quitted him; but Junot and M. de Villemanzy had replaced M. de Talleyrand. As soon as the First Consul saw my mother, he went direct to her, and said, "Well! Madame Permon, what have you to say to one of your old friends? It seems to me that you easily forget them. Do you know, I thought you very rigorous the other evening, and at the very time when one of your friends held his knife in readiness!"

"O horrible!" exclaimed my mother; "how can you, Napoleon, say such things?—*Per Dio tacete! tacete!*"

"But why should you not return my friendly salute? I took the first moment of recognising you to make it."

My mother alleged the weakness of her eyes, and not without cause; for they became very useless in the last years of her life; but General Bonaparte would not be put off with this excuse. "What am I to think?" said he; "are we no longer friends?"

"*Non posso dimenticare, caro Napoleone, che siete figlio dell' amica; fratello del mio buon Giuseppe, del caro Luciano, e di*

Pauletta."—The First Consul made a movement, which I noticed, and replied with a bitter accent:

"So, then, if I still hold a place in your regard, I owe it to my mother and my brothers. It may well be said, that to expect friendship from a woman is to expect the sands of the desert to remain fixed."

This discussion caused me pain; it seemed that my mother remembered that unfortunate quarrel excited by one of our cousins, who never could indemnify us for the affection which we lost through his means. The First Consul walked in silence towards the fire. My mother was seated upon a sofa opposite to him, her arms crossed upon her bosom, and shaking her foot in the fashion which usually preceded a violent scene. Albert, going to and fro between the chamber and the saloon, at this moment approached General Bonaparte to offer him an ice.

"I assure you," said he, "that neither Madame Permon nor myself require ice; indeed, I believe we are petrified; I knew very well that absence deadened remembrance, but not to such a point as this." He touched an unlucky string.

"Truly!" said my mother, with a constrained smile, but with her lips sufficiently opened to show her two-and-thirty pearls (on which General Bonaparte cast his eyes; he spoke of them to me the following day); "truly! one may be permitted to forget after an interval of some years. Did you not wish to persuade me that it was difficult to remember, after a few days, an action which affected the fate of an entire life?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the First Consul, and his countenance darkened in an instant. He knit that brow, the movement of which already agitated the universe; his under lip pressed strongly against the other; and, joining his hands behind him, he walked a few paces without speaking; but all this was scarcely visible, as Junot and my brother told me, when I returned from joining in a country-dance. The First Consul promptly resumed his air of serenity, and seating himself beside my mother, looked attentively at her hand, which he had taken to kiss.

"It seems to me that you do not correct any of your faults, Madame Permon?" and he pointed to the bitten nails of her fingers.

"No," said my mother, "they and I have grown old together. Leave all in its place; it is only you who are forbidden to remain as you are; you have still so many steps to climb before you reach the summit of your glory, that to wish you repose would be to wish harm to ourselves."

"Do you really think as you speak?"

"You know my sincerity. I do not always say all I think; but I never say what I do not think. Have you forgotten my frankness?"

Bonaparte took my mother's hand, and pressed it affectionately. At this moment the clock struck two. He asked for his carriage.

"Will you not stay to supper?" asked my mother.

"I cannot possibly," said he, with an accent of regret; "but I will come and see you again."

My mother smiled, and shook her head gently.

"Why that smile? do you doubt me, Madame Permon? If in this evening either of us have doubted the friendship of the other, I do not think it is I who should be accused of having caused that suspicion. Yes, I shall come and see you again. The Signora Lætitia shall bring me, since I must rest my claim to your regard upon her, or upon Joseph, or upon Lucien, or even upon Paulette; who knows? perhaps upon Jerome. Speaking of that brave little citizen, you brought him up well while I was far off. I find him wilful, and wilful in bad things. The Signora Lætitia spoils him so totally that I much doubt whether he will mend where he now is."

To speak of Jerome was to touch another chord which vibrated very sensibly on my mother's ear. "He is an excellent lad," said she; "all warmth of heart, and good sentiments. Jerome is a true sailor; let him tan himself in the sea-air, and he will return to you a Duguay-Trouin, or at least a Duquesne."

This was not the only time in the course of the evening that my mother had advanced an opinion with which she was not perfectly satisfied; but she loved Jerome, I believe, almost as well as she loved me, and her partiality really went a great way. The First Consul was right when he said, that at his return, he found his brother singularly educated. The seniors of the family had taken care that every thing should be in good order; that is to say, Jerome was at the College of Juilly, and was frequently visited there by his family; but himself still more frequently visited Paris, to offer the respects of a young gentleman of fourteen to Mademoiselle Emilie and Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais; then believing himself a man, the studies went on as they might. Jerome and I were of the same age; my mother, who coupled with his birth the unhappy circumstances of the death of M. Charles Bonaparte, loved him so much the more. In general, she had a warm affection for all the brothers, but had her preferences amongst them, as amongst the sisters. Madame Leclerc was her favourite, and to such a degree, that I, who could not share her prejudice, often had warm discussions with her on the subject, in

which perhaps jealousy might have its share. At that time I loved Madame Murat the best of Napoleon's sisters, and Joseph and Lucien were, with the First Consul, those of the whole family whom I preferred. Jerome had been very much loved, very much spoilt, not only by my mother, but by my brother, and indeed by all of us. I did not find that, when he advanced in life, and consequently when his sentiments might be expected to develop themselves, he was to my mother in particular what he ought to have been. I do not accuse him, but I shall have future occasion to prove that I was not mistaken. But this, after all, is no crime.

The First Consul related to us this same evening, while speaking of Jerome, that he had contracted one of the oddest debts that could be imagined for a youth of fifteen. The First Consul was at Marengo: his brother was already in the service; but being too young to be brought into battle was left at Paris. On the return of the First Consul, Bourrienne was presented with a number of bills, amounting in the whole to a considerable sum, the payment of which was pressing. Amongst the rest Biennais figured in particular for eight or ten thousand francs. Great inquiries were made, and many reports were spread, as to how so large a debt could have arisen? At length it was discovered that M. Jerome Bonaparte had purchased of M. Biennais, Rue Saint-Honoré, at the sign of the Singe Violet, a magnificent travelling-case, containing every thing that could be invented by elegance and luxury, in gold, mother-of-pearl, silver, and ivory, the finest porcelains, and the most beautifully-executed enamels; in short, the whole was a jewel. But one very essential thing was wanting to this dressing-case, and that was a beard to make it useful; for whatever it contained would admit of no other application. Razors, shaving-pots of all sizes, in silver and china; combs for the *moustaches;* in short, every article of convenience for shaving, but the beard was wanting; and, unfortunately, the young man who was but fifteen had some long years to wait for it. The First Consul told this little history in a very entertaining style.

When he left my mother's on the ball-night, he promised to come again to see her, but my mother had preserved so much distance of manner in their conversation, as was likely to prevent all renewal of intimacy. I believe, however, that the definite rupture must be attributed to a cause, natural perhaps, but which was indelicately made use of. I shall frequently have occasion to revert to this subject—my pen takes it up involuntarily.

CHAPTER LI.

The tribunes and long harangues—The consular court and the Roman forum—M. Andrieux—Lucien, the author of the 18th Brumaire—Depression of Lucien, and remarkable visit—Lord Malmesbury—Madame Bonaparte and her brother-in-law—Embarrassment of the First Consul—Lucien announces his departure—*The road to the throne*—Lucien's children—Secrecy of Lucien's journey—The little beggar—Portrait of Lucien—The Fléchelle family and injustice repaired.

At the period of my marriage the consular court was rather singularly organized. Its arrangement was somewhat affected by the strong prejudices of the First Consul. He wished it to be on a grand style, yet was fearful of incurring the reproach already directed against him by several tribunes, who, mistaking the *Palais Royal*, where equality no longer existed, for the Roman forum, delighted in making long harangues in which Cæsar, Brutus, Pericles, Solon, Aristides, and Lycurgus, all found a place, but which had no more reference to the unfortunate French Republic, than if its locality was beyond Tobolsk.

In the speech delivered by Andrieux towards the end of *Vendémiaire*, France was at least mentioned, and attention pointed to her affairs; but with the exception of some immoderate eulogies on several of our generals, this discourse was but ill calculated to answer the exigency of a moment, when, recalled almost from the brink of the grave by the powerful ascendancy of an extraordinary man, union and vigilance amongst her sons became even more necessary, to guard against the too commanding influence of that ascendancy over her destinies. I am, in my own mind, persuaded, that had Bonaparte encountered a reasonable resistance, a continual warning from one of the orders of the state instituted by himself, he would have learned to curb that impetuosity, which, meeting no check from without, he suffered to lead him on unrestrained.

The Republic, or rather that republican Will, which, from the 9th *Thermidor* to the 18th *Fructidor*, 1797, alone remained to us, was still represented at court by one man, who entered on the political arena precisely at that moment. A real passion for liberty was the sacred passion which inspired him. His head was filled with republican and Utopian ideas, which would have been perhaps impossible

to realize, although engendered by a soul of the purest and noblest sentiments. I speak of Lucien Bonaparte. He called himself Brutus at Marathon, and this mixture of the Greek and the Roman was at this time much laughed at; but a single bond served to reconcile the incongruity, an ardent desire of establishing and maintaining the republic in France; not that republic whose very remembrance excites a shudder in the most hardened hearts, those times which, far from being a consequence of the revolution, constituted a deviation from it, but a republic, such in short as a great people may possess. Alas! are we not ourselves an impediment to its establishment?

Lucien, immediately after the 18th Brumaire, was appointed Minister of the Interior.*

It is unfortunate that a prejudice, for it was certainly nothing else, prevented his being elected Second or Third Consul.

At first sight, the participation of two brothers in the Consulate would naturally lead to the conclusion that but one will directed the Executive; whereas, in reality, the national interest would have been far better defended than by a man such as the Consul Lebrun, who, unquestionably honest himself, was nevertheless too readily disposed to affirm every proposition, even of his second, and still more of his first colleague.

In accomplishing the events of the 18th Brumaire, at which he had laboured with an influential activity, whose remembrance should never have deserted Napoleon, it cannot be doubted that Lucien believed his brother would confer on France a government that should render her at once happy at home, and great and formidable abroad. As for war, it was then looked upon merely as a party of pleasure; in its prosecution, not only the glory but the good fortune of the French was calculated upon as certain. In the interior, on the other hand, misery was at its height: although not in the Consulate, as Minister of the Interior, much was in Lucien's power: the choice of prefects and of mayors; new municipal laws to be given to the Communes; the whole mode of election to be reformed; manufactures to be protected, which at that time were every where rising; new discoveries to be collected; and misery to be relieved by employment, the only alms which should be bestowed on the people: all this he foresaw and undertook with courage and success. But he soon appeared sad and

* M. de Laplace preceded him, but only for a few days; his pursuits in science and those of the administration could not possibly advance together. When he was nominated, an acquaintance of mine made, with two strokes of a pencil, a charming little drawing of an astrologer falling in a well; the resemblance to M. de Laplace was perfect.

unhappy. Obstacles multiplied around him: he had spoken of them to my brother-in-law; my mother, who tenderly loved him, perceived it before he opened the subject. Lucien was unhappy, and doubly so, through the means of his brother. But in justice to Bonaparte, I must declare that he was unworthily deceived with respect to his brother; he was persuaded of the existence of facts entirely false. He was even inspired by some one with uneasiness for his personal safety. He never yielded to these suspicions, but the voice which accused his brother was one very dear to him. It was evident that he sought with avidity every thing that could afford him a ray of consolation amidst that perplexing obscurity with which others endeavoured to fill up the distance that fate had just established between the two brothers, an interval which Lucien always respected, even when refusing to acknowledge it, but which the First Consul should have overlooked. A violent animosity had, however, arisen between Madame Bonaparte and her brothers-in-law, which not only interrupted the domestic happiness of this numerous family, but proved in the end a source of the greatest misfortune to herself.

I visited my mother every day, and frequently dined with her. One day that we had dined alone, Albert and M. de Geouffre being both absent, we had scarcely risen from the table when Lucien arrived. He was mournful, very serious, and appeared in deep thought. My mother remarking it, he admitted it, and told us he was on the eve of departure; upon which my mother uttered an exclamation. "Did not you know it?" said he; "I take Geouffre with me."

"If you wish to let me know your affairs by my son-in-law," replied my mother, "command him to communicate them, for when you are in question he is a true Malmesbury."*

"Yes, I am going," said Lucien, crossing his arms over his bosom and contemplating the fire with that sombre distraction which indicates an acute and profound grief: "I am going! my counsels displease; and moreover there is at present a barrier between Napoleon and me

* Lord Malmesbury was sent on a special mission to the Directory from England in the year VII., while M. de Talleyrand was Minister for Foreign Affairs. It is to be presumed that Lord Malmesbury's instructions were not very extensive, for at every word hazarded by Talleyrand, who, it may be observed, does not himself waste many, Lord Malmesbury uniformly replied: "Allow me to write home respecting that." ("*Permettez que j'en écrive à ma cour.*") And as we seldom fail to take advantage of the ridiculous, a caricature was exhibited, in which Talleyrand, stepping up to the English Ambassador, inquires how he is? and Lord Malmesbury shows him, according to the custom of caricatures, a long paper, inscribed with the words, "*Permettez-moi d'en écrire à ma cour.*"

which can never be removed, because it is beneath my character to justify myself, and thereby to recognise the legality of a tribunal which, on the contrary, I challenge. My brother believes the perfidious insinuations of a woman with whom he ought to be too well acquainted to sacrifice his family to her; he suspects the fidelity of a brother, whose devotedness has been the sole means of opening to him the road to a throne."

"To a throne!" cried my mother.

Lucien replied only by a smile, at once melancholy and expressive; "always remember, Madame Permon," rejoined he, "that I certainly had no such thoughts on the 18th and 19th Brumaire."

It may be well supposed, that in speaking afterwards of Lucien to the First Consul, I was careful not to repeat this part of the conversation.

"Are you going far?" inquired my mother. "I must not tell you; I ought not to have announced my departure. I request of Madame Junot not to speak of this conversation before her husband."

In fact some days afterwards Lucien quitted Paris.

A carriage, containing Arnaud, a miniature painter named Chatillon, and M. Felix Desporte, preceded him, and took the road to Amiens, while Lucien, in his *berline*, with my brother-in-law, set out towards Bordeaux.

He had with him his two little girls, the youngest of whom was still in arms; and on these two little beings he lavished all the cares of the most attentive female.

My mother, learning that he was going to take his children, advised him to leave them with the kind and excellent Madame Joseph; but at the first word Lucien, starting from his chair, exclaimed, "No, no; I will not leave my children here; do not talk to me of separating from them! I may be accused of levity, of easy morals, but at least neither mother, brothers, children, nor friends, shall ever have occasion to reproach my heart." He was much agitated: my mother embraced him and said, "Well, you are right; take these poor little ones; they are no longer blessed with a mother, and a fond father can alone supply her loss."

A messenger was dispatched after the carriage, which was journeying towards Amiens; it changed its course, and rejoined Lucien near Bordeaux. I know not the cause of all this mystery; perhaps it was designed to conceal from Austria, with whom negotiations were carrying on, the mission of the First Consul's brother, as Ambassador to Spain. This could not indeed be kept secret above seven or eight days, but that is much in diplomatic relations; I state the facts as they

occurred: Lucien arrived at Madrid, and replaced there two men whose abilities, when compared with his, made a very *médiocre* appearance; these were Berthier and Alquier.

Some time after the departure of Lucien an affair was much talked of, and his enemies would fain have misrepresented it; but the following is the exact truth. The ages of the children are particularly accurate, a matter of some importance to the good or evil face of the story.

A boy eleven years of age, neatly dressed, was standing in the street des Petit Champs, near the Place Vendome, and asking alms of persons in whose physiognomy he could descry a more than common share of humanity. A young man wrapped up in a large blue great-coat, with knit pantaloons of gray silk, a round hat, and gold spectacles, casually looked upon the child as he passed. There was kindness in his countenance, and his smile imboldened the poor little importunate to hold out his hand; the gentleman frowned, yet gave him a coin of *douze sous* (sixpence).

"Why do you beg, child?" said he, in a severe tone. The poor child began to cry, pointing with his finger to a woman and two little girls, the eldest of whom was ten, and the other nine, seated on the stone bench of the house which then stood in a little recess, where the passage to the Jacobin market now is.

"These are my mother and sisters," said he, sobbing; "my father is very ill, and I have a little brother younger than my sisters; I cannot work, and we must eat, and give my father his barley-water: how can this be done if I do not beg?"

The gentleman, overcome with such a tale of misery, approached the woman, asked her some questions, and having taken her address, left her a louis-d'or.

On his return to the Home Department, Lucien, who has no doubt been recognised in the portrait I have just drawn, charged a confidential person to make inquiries respecting the Fléchelle family. The result of these inquiries was not only satisfactory, but of a nature to extort a blush from the government, had it been possible for the Directory to blush for its evil deeds. Fléchelle had been employed in the grant office, where his conduct was irreproachable, but in consequence of one of those intrigues too common under a venal government, he was dismissed without pension or indemnity; and, as security against his complaints, was calumniated to the minister of the day, who refused even to see him. This man had four children, and from an easy competence, his family were suddenly plunged into absolute destitution. Overwhelmed with grief, the vigilance of his wife alone

defeated an attempt at suicide, and soon remorse occasioned an illness. Lucien the next day sent them, through his confidential agent, a hundred francs, and an abundant provision of sugar, coffee, candles, oil, etc., a cart-load of wood, and a sack of coals: he also conferred on Fléchelle, as a just indemnity, the brevet of a place at the *barrières*, worth two thousand francs.

The agitating joy of the news proved too much for the unhappy father's frame, enfeebled by long illness; he died, and left his family again exposed to misery. Lucien, immersed in cares at the moment of his departure for Spain, was unable then to assist them, but the excellent Mrs. Anson, meeting with the desolate family, became a second consoling and succouring angel to them. Attempts were made to report the story at Malmaison in a very different light; I took the liberty of representing the truth. "The young girls are not sixteen or seventeen years of age," said I to Madame Bonaparte, "for I have seen them."—"Then I have been deceived," replied she, "but you have much affected me by the misfortunes of this poor family; give me Madame Fléchelle's address, for I will send to her to-morrow; I wish to have my part in the good work." She sent them, I believe, forty francs. Madame Bonaparte was often compassionate, but the universality of her protection and her recommendations often made her ridiculous, even in the eyes of those to whom she was benevolent.

CHAPTER LII.

The consular court—Madame Bonaparte's apartments—Functions of M. Benezech and the republicans—The Aides-de-camp—Chamberlains—The grand dinners at the Tuileries—Improvement of morals—The ladies of the emigration—Installation at the Tuileries—The two processions—General Lannes's broth—The fortnight's parades—Intercourse of the First Consul with the soldiers—My Cachemire shawl, and my father-in-law's watch—The Swedish Minister and the Batiste handkerchief—Bonaparte, a drummer, and the sabre of honour—The Baron Ernsworth—The King of Spain's horses—The diplomatic corps in 1800—M. de Lucchesini and the Italian harangue.

The consular court at the moment of my marriage was at its highest point of perfection. Its etiquette was afterwards totally changed; there was ceremony on one hand, while on the other the design was popularity, though unsuccessful.

Madame Bonaparte occupied the whole ground-floor of the Tuile-

ries, which was equally her residence as Empress, and afterwards that of Maria Louisa. Adjoining her dressing-room was that of the small apartment of Mademoiselle de Beauharnais, consisting of her bed-chamber, and a study scarcely of sufficient dimensions to render the smell of her oil-paints endurable, when she this winter* painted her brother's portrait. The apartments of Madame Bonaparte were furnished tastefully but without luxury; the great reception-saloon was hung with yellow draperies; the moveable furniture was damask, the fringes of silk, and the wood, mahogany. No gold was to be seen. The other rooms were not more richly decorated; all was new and elegant, but no more. The apartments of Madame Bonaparte, however, were destined only for private parties and morning visits.

The larger assemblies were held up stairs. As yet there was neither chamberlain nor prefect of the palace; an old counsellor of state, formerly Minister of the Interior, M. de Benezeck, was charged with the internal administration of the palace, which was at first a little difficult to introduce amongst what remained of true republicanism. The functions of M. Benezeck embraced those afterwards divided between the Grand Chamberlain and the Master of the Ceremonies. The *maîtres d'hôtel* and ushers performed the subaltern offices, and the *aides-de-camp* supplied the place of chamberlains.

The First Consul was in the habit of dining two hundred persons every ten days. These dinners were given in the gallery of Diana, and the guests were of all ranks and classes, always including the diplomatic body, which at this time was become tolerably numerous. The wives of civil functionaries, of generals, and colonels, formed the society, for as yet no one ventured to say the court of Madame Bonaparte. The General was rigid in the choice he made, not for his quintidian routs, but for the private and frequent invitations to Malmaison, and afterwards to St. Cloud. It is a fact, which only prejudiced minds will dispute, that the First Consul wished to perpetuate, as far as lay in his power, the amelioration of morals produced by the revolution. This will perhaps excite a smile in the perusal: nevertheless, it is certain that the morals of the existing generation have been retempered by the revolution.

Adversity is a hard school; its lessons have not been spared, and we had not the example of a corrupt court to frustrate their advantages. Perhaps had the revolution not run its course, such a change might

* This same winter of 1800, the Tuileries caught fire, and Mademoiselle Beauharnais's portrait of her brother, which was a strong likeness, was consumed. This fire was imputed to incendiaries, but falsely; it was occasioned by ill-constructed flues.

have been effected amongst the highest classes by the same example which had been formerly so pernicious. Louis the Fifteenth had both poisoned Paris and the provinces with a breath of corruption, which spread as an infectious pestilence through the whole kingdom; and all the virtue of the unhappy Louis the Sixteenth scarcely sufficed to repress among depraved spirits, with whom all kinds of morality were a subject of mockery, the noisy and haughty expression of sentiments which in their estimation belonged to good society. Vice and disorder were indeed no longer protected by the heads of the state, but levity and immodesty in all that related to the reputation and fate of the female sex, were but too much in vogue at the moment of the revolution. The misfortunes of that era cast a shade of seriousness even over those who by age and fortune were placed in a sphere of noise and folly. Celebrated names may be cited to the contrary, but my assertion is not thereby invalidated. Exceptions are said to prove rules.

It is certain that in 1800, when the court of the Tuileries was formed, society wore an appearance of morality and domestic virtue which it had never before displayed in France. The Noblesse, or what was at length by common consent denominated the *Faubourg Saint-Germain*, was constrained to follow the general current, although here again some exceptions were known in ladies who founded their fame on the importation of follies from Brussels, Coblentz, etc., and afterwards from England. Eventually, the imperial court, like all else pertaining to sovereignty, spread its malign influence. It was, however, comparatively but little open to censure, as the Emperor exercised a magical sway over every woman admitted to his court. But for the present we must confine ourselves to the Consulate, one of the most strikingly interesting periods of Napoleon's life.

When the different powers had adopted the new constitution proposed after the 18th Brumaire, and which I believe was the fourth they were called upon to sanction, the Government quitted the little Luxembourg for the Tuileries. It may be observed, that the First Consul, who had at first lodged the Third Consul in the Pavilion of Flora, soon retook the sole possession of it, and M. Lebrun, like Cambacérès, retired to the occupation of a private house.* The

* Cambacérès lived at the Hotel d'Elbœuf, in the Place Carrousel, opposite the Tuileries. The Consul Lebrun had the Hotel de Noailles, Rue Saint Honoré. This appropriation was made in conformity to the family wants of the two Consuls. Lebrun had his mother-in-law and five children with him (his eldest daughter, who soon afterwards married M. de Plancy, the youngest, now Madame de Chabrol, and his three sons, Charles, Alexander,

whole consular triumvirate, however, was present at the reception of ambassadors or of national bodies. The 30th *Pluviose*, in the year VIII. (19th Feb. 1800), the First Consul took possession of the palace of the kings, which, indeed, from the commencement of the revolution, had been occupied by the National Representatives. At this time the constitution of the 18th Brumaire exalted the consular power above all other national authorities: it represented, in itself, the French people; and such an authority required a suitable abode. He who had witnessed the removal from the Luxembourg to the Tuileries, on the 30th *Pluviose* of the year VIII., if he had then fallen asleep to the sound of military music, playing all our patriotic airs, and had been awakened by the thunder of cannon on the morning of the 2d December, announcing that the Emperor Napoleon was about to be crowned by the Pope in Notre Dame, would have discovered a curious contrast between the two processions. In the first, on account of the scarcity of private carriages at that time in Paris, it was necessary to engage for counsellors of state and senators, hackney-coaches, whose numbers were covered with white paper, producing an effect far more ludicrous than if the numbers had remained visible.

On the day of his installation at the Tuileries, scarcely had the First Consul arrived before he mounted his horse, and held a review in the court of the palace, which was not then surrounded by a railing, but enclosed by ill-jointed boards; and the Place du Carrousel was then small and very irregular. The change was rapid; a word from Napoleon was sufficient.

The First Consul admitted that he was happy during his reviews. —"And you too, I am sure, are well content while I am with your conscripts," said he, one day, to General Lannes. "You do not grumble because the parade retards our dinner for an hour."—"Oh! dear, no," replied General Lannes, "it is all alike to me, whether I eat my soup warm or cold, provided you will set us to work at making a hot broth for those rascally English."

He had an aversion for the English that I have never observed in any other general of the Emperor's army, even of those who had fought under the Republic.*

and Augustus Lebrun), he required therefore a more spacious dwelling than Cambacérès, who lived alone.

* It is singular that the eldest son of the Marshal is married to an Englishwoman, and it is reported that a younger son is about to follow the example. This proves that sentiments are not always hereditary, and happily, for hatred is but a sorry sentiment. It seems, however, strange to see the affections of a family thus take a direction diametrically opposed to those of its head. I

The quintidians (for we must speak the language of the period) were chosen for reviews, or rather for parades, in the court of the Tuileries. These parades were a spectacle worth seeing, especially during the Consulate. Under the Empire they might be more magnificent; but in 1800 their splendour was wholly national. It was the glory of France that we contemplated in those squadrons and battalions, which, whether composed of conscripts or veterans, equally impressed with fear the foreigner who surveyed them from the windows of the palace; for the ardour of the young troops was fostered by constantly beholding the old musketeers of the Consular Guard covered with scars; and were ready, even while under arms, to sing in chorus, like the young Spartans:

Comme vous, un jour nous serons
Vaillans et combattans,
Nous aussi, nous vaincrons! etc.*

The First Consul took pleasure in these reviews, which would sometimes occupy him for five hours together, without a moment's interval of repose. All the regiments in France came alternately to Paris, and passed in review with the guards every fortnight at noon. The First Consul was, on these occasions, always attended by the aide-de-camp on duty, the Minister of War, the General commanding the first division, and the Commandant of Paris, the Commissary-general, the Commissaries of War attached to the city of Paris; in short, all persons to whom orders must be immediately transmitted, in case the First Consul should, in the course of the inspection, find any alteration or improvement requisite. By this means no delay could arise in the communication of orders: every thing was done instantaneously and satisfactorily; for it was well understood, that the eye of the Chief closely superintended all, and that if punishment were awarded to negligence, punctuality would be duly appreciated.

Sometimes he galloped along the ranks, but this was rarely; he never, indeed, sat his horse, unless the troops had already passed in review, and he was satisfied that nothing was wanting. Even then he would address a few questions to two or three soldiers casually selected; but generally after having rode along the ranks on his white

believe his daughter-in-law might have cured him of his prejudices; she is a beautiful, amiable, and charming person. If his brother chooses as well as the elder, he will be welcome to bring us a new countrywoman.

* We also shall, like you, be one day
Valiant warriors,
We also, we will conquer, etc.

horse (*le Désiré*), he would alight, and converse with all the field-officers, and with nearly all the subalterns and soldiers. His solicitude was extended to the most minute particulars—the food, the dress, and every thing that could be necessary to the soldier, or useful to the man, divided his attention with the evolutions. He encouraged the men to speak to him without restraint. "Conceal from me none of your wants," he would say to them; "suppress no complaints you may have to make of your superiors. I am here to do justice to all, and the weaker party is especially entitled to my protection."

These words he one day addressed to a demi-brigade (I believe it was the 17th), aware that the regiment before its removal to Paris had suffered deprivations in the department where it had been in garrison. Such a system was not only attended with immediately beneficial results, but was adroitly adapted to answer a general and not less useful purpose. The army and its Chief thus became inseparably united, and in the person of that Chief the army beheld the French nation.

Thus the state, through him, dispensed both blame and commendation. Besides, Paris by this means became acquainted with the army, and the troops, alternately visiting the capital, ceased to regard it as another continent, and themselves as foreigners in it.

My husband, who invariably attended the First Consul on these parades, communicated to me every thing remarkable; and in reporting the achievements of a day, which to other men would have comprised the labour of a month, would add: "All this proceeds with magic mechanism; this man is a supernatural being." Junot, it is true, might view his beloved General with prejudiced eyes; but not on these occasions, for he was at this period of his life truly admirable.

The diplomatic corps showed great eagerness to witness the parades, a privilege usually enjoyed by foreigners from the windows of General Duroc, who already occupied that part of the ground-floor at the end of the Empress's apartments. From the same place I saw the first parade after my marriage, on which occasion an amusing adventure happened to my father-in-law. Junot's attendance being required on horseback, he could not escort me to Duroc's but intrusted me to his own family, who themselves had never seen a parade. Arrived at the railing of the Pont-Royal, we alighted, and crossing the garden, endeavoured to gain on foot Duroc's door, which is situated at the right corner of the vestibule; but it was late, and we were compelled to make our way through a dense crowd. My mother-in-law, always happy, and always merry, only jested on the pummelings she encoun-

tered; but her husband, quite unaccustomed to such things, was in terrible ill-humour, and railed particularly at the carelessness of young Parisian ladies, who would venture handsome Cachemire shawls in such a crowd, repeatedly assuring me that I should lose mine, and at the same time boasting his own prudence in securing his watch, by guarding it constantly with his hand.

His cautions and vaunts were of course alike overheard, and as the most effectual means of momentarily eluding his vigilance, a dexterous twitch was given to my shawl; the manœuvre completely succeeded—I screamed, the shawl was saved; but, alas! that moment sufficed for the abstraction of the carefully-guarded watch; and its unfortunate master, on discovering his loss, clamorously lamented over an old and valued servant of thirty-five years standing, till reminded by Madame Junot that it stopped about once a week, and had within the last year cost him fifty francs in repairs.

Meanwhile we had reached Duroc's door, and were placed at a window. The parade had not yet commenced. The officers were silently promenading in the ranks of their respective regiments; speaking, occasionally, but only in a whisper, to a soldier or subaltern, when the carrying of a weapon, or the position of a hat seemed to demand rectifying. This general hush was not inspired by fear of the First Consul, for he was adored by the army, and its chiefs, as well as its subordinates, who were desirous of meriting his praises. Oh! what a time was that!

It would be difficult to describe the impression made on me by this first spectacle of a review.

Junot, who knew the passionate enthusiasm of my patriotism, had warned me that I should be much agitated; he kissed his hand to me in passing, and smiling to see my handkerchief at my eyes, whispered to Duroc, when both again looked at me, and I observed that my emotion affected them. How could it be otherwise? they, too, loved their country, loved her glory, and the man who thus dazzled us by the splendour of that glory with which he illumined all France. And then these soldiers, who gazed on him with eyes in which were distinctly legible—"Yes, we will die for the greatness of France, and for his renown; we are ready, where must we march?" And himself answering these tacit oaths by paternal affection; questioning the soldiers as to their birthplace, and their parents; acquainting himself with their situation, and supporting with a pension the mother whose son had left his farm and his vineyard to defend his country. Oh! what a time was that!

A gentleman sat near me, whose admiration of the scene before

him was so profound and so worthy of the occasion, that it struck me; he was a foreigner, and wore an ensign so singular that I could not resist the impulse of curiosity, and was indiscreet enough to inquire the meaning of it. It was a very fine batiste handkerchief of extraordinary whiteness, tied round his arm like the scarf of an aide-de-camp. "It is a memorial of my sovereign and of a glorious day, Madame," answered he; and announced himself as the Baron of Ernsworth, the Swedish Minister. I introduced to him the parents of General Junot, to whom he was as polite as he could have been to all the Montmorencies and all the La Tremouilles of France; he was near fifty years of age, and of a fine figure, perhaps somewhat too much *embonpoint* for the chaste elegance of the military costume which he wore. He spoke, with an expression which went to my heart, of the reputation of him whose name I bore. "So young," said he, "and already so famed; but with such a captain, how can the lieutenants, though but children, be otherwise than worthy sons of their country!"

At this moment the First Consul stopped under our window, and said to a drummer of about sixteen or seventeen, "So it was you, my brave boy, who beat the charge before Zurich." The countenance of the young soldier was suffused with crimson, but it was not timidity which called the flush to his cheek. He raised towards the First Consul his large black eyes, sparkling with joy at being thus publicly distinguished, and replied in a half-tremulous, half-confident tone, "Oui, mon Général."

"It was you, too, who at Weser gave proof of the most gallant presence of mind by saving your commander."* The youth blushed still deeper this time from modesty, and answered, in a lower voice than before, "Oui, mon Général."—"Well, I must discharge the debt of the country; it will be paid you not in a ring of honour, but a sabre of honour; I appoint you a subaltern in the Consular Guard; continue to behave well, and I will take care of you."

As the First Consul ceased speaking, he raised his eyes to the low window at which we were seated, and touching his hat, saluted us all with a gracious smile. My mother-in-law's eyes filled with tears,

* I was particularly struck by this fact, because all the occurrences of this first parade made a deep impression on my mind; but the military annals of the period are filled with similar anecdotes, too frequent to obtain insertion in "The Moniteur," or other journals. Speaking of the above the same evening to the First Consul, as comparable to the noblest deeds of antiquity, he replied, "Bah! ask your husband; he will tell you there is neither regiment nor demi-brigade in the army that could not cite ten such. He himself would be the hero of several."

"How ought we to love this man!" said she crying and laughing together; "see how the poor boy is overpowered." The young drummer was leaning on the shoulder of a comrade, and following Bonaparte with his eyes. He was pale as death, but how eloquent were his looks! I know not what may have become of him; but I will answer for it, if his life were sacrificed for Napoleon, it cost him no regret. He was in the evening the subject of my conversation with the First Consul; he listened with interest, and addressing Berthier, who was just arrived from Spain to take the portefeuille of Minister of War, desired him to take down the young man's name, and provide him with outfit for his new rank. He may be at this day either a general, or of the number of the dead; one or the other he most assuredly is. This parade was selected for my first attendance, because some spirited horses sent to the First Consul by the Spanish King were then to be presented. The ceremony was said to recall the equestrian present made to Cromwell by a German Prince. I know not what the Mecklenburgh horses might have been, but the Spanish were sixteen most beautiful creatures, both in coat and form; fourteen were from the royal stud, and two of them from the studs of the Count of Altamira and the Duke of Medina Cœli; and these latter were the tallest and finest of the troop; the first, El Jounalero, a really superb animal, and the other of equal size and younger, showed the fire, the slight fetlock, and arched neck of the Arabian breed. After the parade, Junot introduced me in all the forms of etiquette to the Baron d'Ernsworth, who, at my request, promised me a full narrative of that day so memorable for Sweden, in which, since he still wore its insignia after a lapse of twenty-eight years, he must apparently have borne an important part.*

The diplomatic corps was at that time composed of the Spanish and Roman Ambassadors, the Ministers of Denmark, Sweden, Baden, and Hesse Cassel; the Dutch Ambassador, M. Shimmelpening, celebrated for his beautiful and most courteous wife; ambassadors from the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics, and a Swiss minister.

Prussia, still desirous of an accommodation with us, had, in October, 1800, despatched M. Lucchesini on a special mission, but his credentials as minister plenipotentiary were not presented till 1801 or 1802; he remained but a few years with us, and after the campaign

* This revolution took place on the 18th of August, 1772. The partisans of Guiland adopted as a rallying-sign a white handkerchief tied round the arm; and the King, after his final success, granted, as an honorary recompense to his faithful adherents, permission to wear for life a white handkerchief round the left arm, in commemoration of the service they had rendered to the crown.

of Jena returned no more to France. The First Consul disliked him, and accused him of intriguing.

"Not that he entraps me," said Bonaparte; "but he willingly would, and that offends me. If those who negotiate with me did but know how much more surely their tortuous path tends to ruining themselves than to misleading me, they would choose a straighter road." An attention which M. Lucchesini hoped would work wonders, was, on the contrary, displeasing to the First Consul, and threw the foreign diplomatist into a dilemma from which he could never recover, because he was long unconscious of it: this was, haranguing the First Consul in Italian on delivering his credentials. Bonaparte had a strong objection to being addressed in Italian; he was, and chose to be, a Frenchman.

Soon after this the Congress of Luneville gave us peace with Austria, and that of Amiens with England. Russia also became our ally, and all this within less than a year. These are delightful recollections, and again I exclaim: Oh! what a time was that!

CHAPTER LIII.

Revival of the public prosperity—Destruction of the bands of robbers—M. Dubois, Prefect of Police—The exhibition of 1800—David and the picture of the Sabines—Girodet, and the vengeance of an artist—The satirical picture of Danaë—Gerard—Belisarius and the portrait of Moreau—The King of Spain's pistols given to General Moreau—Remarkable words of Napoleon—Moreau's distrust of him—Napoleon's popularity.

I HAVE already observed with what rapidity General Bonaparte had succeeded in consolidating a corps, which every day acquired new strength and stability. All who surrounded him, it must be acknowledged, lent their aid with a persevering ability, of which he could thoroughly appreciate the advantages. Every day brought news of the seizure of some fresh band of brigands, robbers of diligences, forgers, or false coiners; the latter especially were very numerous. Dubois, the Prefect of Police, was extremely zealous and active in discovering the guilty, and such as under futile political pretexts disturbed the public tranquillity: he was inestimable in his place, and Napoleon, who undoubtedly knew how to discern and to employ the men who would answer his purpose, took care not to remove him from his office, till after the fire at Prince Schwartzenburg's ball.

Not only were all the interior wheels of the state machine beginning to play, but even the arts, that more silent and centrical spring, afforded striking proofs of the reviving prosperity of France. The exhibition was this year particularly good. Guérin, David, Gérard, Girodet, and a powerful assemblage of talent, excited by that emulation which the fire of genius always inspires, produced works which will hereafter raise our school to an elevated rank. The picture of the Sabines and of Marcus Sextus, besides several portraits, adorned the exhibition of paintings for the year 1800.

I will here notice some circumstances connected with them worth preserving, and not recorded in their journals. The first is somewhat unworthy of the talent of David. On some frivolous pretence, instead of sending his Rape of the Sabines to the Saloon, he privately exhibited it on payment of a franc, to the peril and danger of Parisian mothers, who, as was observed in a pretty little vaudeville which appeared at the time, dared not take their daughters with them.

Girodet was then in the full vigour of his genius, and united with it a mind of superior order; but he was irascible and passionate, of which this year afforded an instance capable of tarnishing his high character.

He had taken the portrait of a female celebrated for her beauty and dramatic talents, and some discussion arising respecting the payment, the husband imprudently indulged in some very disparaging expressions, which were repeated to the enraged artist, who, disfiguring the portrait with a knife, returned it, with an intimation, that the lady might dispose as she pleased both of it and its stipulated price, as he should pay himself in his own way. If Girodet had confined himself to the threat, which was intended no doubt to alarm the parties, all would have been well, but he went further, and was wrong in so doing.

The saloon was to be open for some days to come; with a rapidity of pencil difficult to conceive, he painted and caused to be placed at the exhibition, a picture of extraordinary merit, representing the interior of a garret; in one corner was a miserable bedstead, covered with a wretched mattress and a blanket full of holes; on this lay a young and beautiful maiden, with a head-dress of peacock's feathers, having no other clothing than a tunic of gauze, through which were seen a pair of legs of gigantic thickness. She held this dress with her two hands to catch a shower of gold that fell from the roof of the garret. Near the bed was a lamp, whose dazzling brightness attracted a crowd of butterflies, who all found their destruction in the traitorous light. Beneath the bedstead was seen an enormous turkey, stretching forth

one of his feet, on the toe of which was a wedding ring. In an obscure corner of the room, was an old woman, dressed like a beggar, resembling perfectly a decrepit wretch who was often seen asking alms at the gate of the Palais Royal, and who, it was said, was the mother of the original in the cut picture, and of whom there was a striking likeness in the recumbent Danaë. Other allusions in the picture were equally remarkable, amongst them a frog swelling itself to an unnatural size, &c.

From the first moment of its exhibition, this picture attracted the undivided curiosity of the visitors: but whether Girodet (who afterwards testified some regret for the extremity to which his resentment had been carried) relented, or whatever the cause, the picture was in a few days withdrawn.

A piece of a different kind, and the principal ornament of the Saloon, was Gérard's portrait of General Moreau. The hand which portrayed Belisarius and Psyché was there distinctly traceable. It was a chef-d'œuvre. Not only was the resemblance perfect, but it seemed to possess a soul. It was not colour laid on canvass, it was animate; it was General Moreau himself who looked upon you.

The position, too, was admirably chosen. It would have been easy and natural to represent him in full action, with all the splendid appendages of military costume, for assuredly Moreau has more than once headed his troops in the hour of danger; but he was habitually calm and reflective; this, therefore, was the expression Gérard judiciously selected, and the dress and attitude were in keeping. Judging by other works of Gérard this will probably always retain the beauty of its colouring.

Independently of his professional talent, Gérard was eminently gifted, and all his compositions are full of mind. His Belisarius is admirable; there are but two persons, an infant and an old man, but no circumstance is omitted that can excite interest in favour of the old Roman General. In the back ground of that gray heap, stamped by Justinian with the anathema of mendicity, is seen only a desert, and a scorching yet stormy horizon. The features of his youthful guide already exhibit the livid paleness of death. Belisarius is thus alone with the agony of death on a narrow path, at the brink of a precipice: one step, and he must fall. His arm, which advances a useless staff, seems to start from the canvass; he is abandoned by all nature.

The portrait of Moreau reminds me of an anecdote concerning him which occurred precisely at that time, and was afterward related to me by Junot, who was an eyewitness. When the rupture of the armistice in Italy and Germany was foreseen, General Moreau came

to Paris to receive the orders of government. He arrived at ten in the morning of the 17th October, and instantly, without even changing his boots, went to the Tuileries. The First Consul was at the time in the council of state, but as soon as he heard of General Moreau's arrival, he hastened to hold a conference with him. While he was in the saloon, the Minister of the Interior, Lucien Bonaparte, happened to enter, bringing a pair of pistols of extremely fine and curious workmanship, which Boutet had just completed by order of the Directory, as a present for the king of Spain. They were valuable both for the skill the artist had applied to their construction, and for a great quantity of diamonds and precious stones with which they were embellished. "These arms come very à-propos," said the First Consul, presenting them to General Moreau with that smile which could win hearts of stone—"General Moreau will do me the favour to accept them as a mark of the esteem and gratitude of the French nation."

"Citizen Minister," added Bonaparte, turning towards his brother, "have some of the battles of General Moreau engraved on the pistols, but not all; we must leave some room for diamonds. Not because the General attaches much value to them; I know that his republican virtue disdains such baubles, but we must not altogether derange the design of Boutet."

Methinks, after such expressions, Moreau might have placed confidence in the friendship Bonaparte offered him. Why should the First Consul have flattered him? Why, especially, should he at that time have offered him a hand which was not sincerely friendly? Was it to flatter the popularity of Moreau? At this period the popularity of Bonaparte was far superior to his. Hohenlinden was not then gained; and even after that brilliant victory, Napoleon had no cause to dread a rival in the hearts of Frenchmen: at this period he was well beloved.

CHAPTER LIV.

The Eastern Queen at the Comédie Française—Pauline and her portrait—The young sempstress of M. de Sales—Marriage of convenience, and the army of Egypt—Cavalcade of asses—Dinner at General Dupuy's, and the wife without her husband—The cup of coffee and the orange—Bonaparte, Berthier, and the husband ambassador—An English tour—*Gallantry* of Kléber—Goodness of Desgenettes—Return to France, and the divorce—Dread of scandal, and the wife with two husbands—Saint Helena, and admirable conduct.

I WAS one day at the *Comédie Française* with my husband, attentively listening to Talma in the part of Orestes, when Junot, touching my arm, told me to look attentively at a young woman he was about to salute, and who was seated between Berthier's box and our own.

My eye followed his salute, and I saw a woman of about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, florid as a young girl of fifteen, and of a gay and agreeable countenance.

Her flaxen hair formed the only ornament of her head. She was wrapped in a magnificent white Cachemire shawl, with an embroidered border, and appeared to be *en négligé*. She returned Junot's salute with an air of acquaintance which surprised me, and I inquired her name.

"It is Pauline," said he, "our Eastern Queen." He had already mentioned Madame Fourès to me, to caution me against the indiscretion of naming her before Madame Bonaparte. "This, then, is Madame Fourès," said I, and instantly put to him all the inquiries one woman will make concerning another, whom she sees for the first time. He told me she had natural wit, and a desire of distinction, but a total ignorance of the manners of the world; that is to say, of good and elegant manners.

"I like her much," said Junot; "she is kind-hearted, simple, and unaffected, always disposed to join in mirth, and still more ready to oblige. I have a friendship for her, and hope to prove it: but there are about the person of the First Consul, men who were at her feet in Egypt, and have since refused to know her, and repulsed her in the little intercourse she has been obliged to hold with them. Duroc, who has honour and a feeling heart, told me that the poor young

creature knew not what would have become of her, had she not opportunely met with him, to convey a letter for her to General Bonaparte. She is no longer in want of any thing, and this is no more than a debt which the First Consul owes to a woman whom he has sincerely loved."

I afterwards learned a variety of particulars relating to Madame Fourès; and as she was long attached to the fate of Napoleon, and gave him in adversity proofs of gratitude and interest, I think it best to insert here all that I know of her.

Pauline was born at Carcassone. Her father was a gentleman, but her mother either a chambermaid or cook. The education of the young daughter partook of the mixed rank to which she owed her birth: she received some instruction, and finally went out to work. She was one of the prettiest girls in the town, and perfectly virtuous. My friends M. and Madame de Sales showed her a kindness which her conduct justified, and treated her more like a child of their own than a workwoman by the day, for her conduct was most exemplary.

She recited M. de Sales's verses, and sang with taste, and it was here principally that her beauty acquired her the surname of *Bellilotte.*

The son of a retired merchant named Fourès was charmed by that pretty Hebe face, and the fame which attended it; he paid his addresses to her, but as he was far from agreeable, she hesitated for some time; an accidental introduction to the table of M. de Sales, to entertain his guests with her singing, and the impression she was sensible of having made there, induced her to consult M. de Sales on the subject of the marriage. "M. Fourès offers me the advantage of a fortune," said she, "moderate it is true, but independent. I think I will accept him;" and shortly after she married him.

The intended Egyptian expedition was soon announced at Carcassone, and Fourès, who had seen service, willing to answer the national appeal to all the retired military capable of bearing arms, set out for Toulon, the general *rendezvous.* He tenderly loved his young bride, and made her the companion of his journey, while her adventurous spirit wished for nothing better than to participate all danger and fatigue with her husband. She put on male attire therefore, and they arrived in Egypt; it is not true that Napoleon had seen her in France, or that he had dressed her as a naval aspirant, on board the *Orient,* as I have read in a foolish book, whose author has collected together all the most absurd falsehoods respecting Napoleon.*

* This book appeared in 1815, and is entitled *l'Amour et l'Ambition, ou la Vie d'un grand Homme,* par Louis Frederic Reisberg. To give an idea of its

When at Cairo, the General-in-chief was one day riding, followed by a numerous staff, to attend a sort of fair or fête, about a league from the town, when the party was detained on the road by a troop of asses, commonly used for the saddle in that country. They were mounted by officers and some of their wives. General Bonaparte, who is well known to have had a quick eye, was struck by a passing glimpse of a female face; yet he pursued his route without a hint of the circumstance.

The next day, Madame Fourès received an invitation to dine with General Dupuy, commandant of the city, who had with him a Madame Dupuy, and the invitation was sent in her name as well as his. "It is singular," said Fourès, "that I am not invited with my wife! for I am an officer." He was a lieutenant in the 22d *chasseurs à cheval*. He however allowed his wife to go, strongly recommending her to make it understood that she had a husband, a fact already but too well known. Madame Fourès was most politely received. The dinner party was select, and every thing passed off quietly, and without the smallest indication of what was to follow; but at the moment coffee was about to be served, a great commotion was heard in the house, the folding doors hastily opened, and the General-in-chief appeared. Dupuy made many apologies for being found at table, pressed a cup of coffee upon Napoleon, which he accepted. He was taciturn, and fixed his attention on the young Frenchwoman, who, blushing like crimson, dared not raise her eyes, and grew momentarily more and more dismayed at finding herself so avowedly an object of attention to a man whose great name was already the theme of the world. The General-in-chief refreshed himself with an orange and a cup of coffee, and then took his leave, without having addressed a single word to Madame Fourès, but also without having once taken his eyes off her.

A few days after Fourès was sent for by Berthier. "My dear Fourès," said the chief of the staff, putting into his hands a voluminous packet, "more fortunate than any of us, you are about to revisit France. The General-in-chief has had reports of you which inspire him with such perfect confidence, that he sends you to Europe as the bearer of despatches to the Directory. You are to set out within an hour; here is an order to the commander of the port of Alexandria. Adieu, my dear fellow; I wish I were in your place."

"But I must go and apprise my wife, that she may make her preparations," said Fourès, recovering at length from the stupefaction he

contents, it is only necessary to say, that the author makes Madame Bonaparte (Josephine) daughter of Louis XV.

had been thrown into by a favour which he received with instinctive doubts. He was, however, dissuaded, by unanswerable arguments, from carrying his wife with him; and Berthier affected sympathy with his distress at the necessary separation.

Fourès, amidst his grief, was tolerably self-satisfied; for, inconceivable as were the singular favours which had sought him out in his obscurity, we all have a reserve of vanity to assist us in comprehending what is incomprehensible; and before he reached his lodging, Fourès had discovered within himself many reasons to explain the General's choice. His wife, who understood them rather better, took leave of him, "with a tear in her eye," and the good lieutenant, embarking, sailed for France. At that period it was more easy to embark for France, than it was to land there. The English were on the alert, and no sooner was a sail descried on the surface of the ocean, than twenty grappling-irons fell pounce upon it, and it was carried, God knows where. Fourès's small vessel shared the common fate of those which left the ports of Egypt; it was taken, and himself searched even to his shirt, for the important papers he was supposed to have concealed; but on examining those which his utmost address could not withhold, the English captain found them to contain nothing but well-known particulars which he remembered to have seen ostentatiously published in the *Moniteur*, from a previous despatch that had had the good fortune to escape.

This gentleman, vastly polite and accommodating, inquired of the lieutenant-ambassador where he would choose to be landed? He was himself bound for Mahon; from thence he sailed to the Molucca islands; thence on a grand tour in the Pacific, or towards the Pole, depending on the instructions he might find at Macao; finally, he would very probably revisit the waters of the Nile; and if M. le Lieutenant preferred a residence on the coast during this little tour, he, a captain in the service of his Britannic Majesty, was quite at his command. Poor Fourès timidly asked if he could not return whence he came? "For," observed he, very judiciously, "now that I am but an empty mail, what end would it answer to absent myself from my wife? Let me return to Cairo." The English captain, who, amongst other circumstantial intelligence from the interior of Egypt, was pretty well acquainted with the affairs of Madame Fourès and the General-in-chief, landed the good lieutenant according to his desire, with great politeness and apparent cordiality, and wished him good luck. Fourès hastened to embrace his Bellilotte, but Bellilotte was no longer beautiful for him; he found his lodging deserted, and his affection being sincere, the poor fellow's consternation and misery were

proportionate. His wife was easily found; she inhabited an hotel close to that of the General; and being persecuted with his entreaties to return, she obtained a divorce pronounced by Commissary-general Sartelon.

Napoleon was much attached to Madame Fourès, who possessed every qualification calculated to attach him; qualifications still more brilliantly attractive in a distant and barbarous country, where the rest of her sex, within reach, were of a station and character from whom Bonaparte would not so much as have thought of seeking a companion. In Pauline he found an active and ardent imagination, an affectionate disposition, abundance of native humour, and a mind sufficiently cultivated to have information without pedantry.

Perfectly unaffected and disinterested, she was all tenderness and devotion. Combining with so many attractions a captivating exterior, Bellilotte could not fail of being beloved by a man, to whom pretension, affectation, and self-interest were odious in women.

She was as full of fun and gaiety as a girl of twelve, and Napoleon often joked her upon this gaiety, and upon the laughing he had heard in the donkey adventure, on the road to Boulack. Her situation threw her into frequent contact with the inferior agents of the commissariat and military treasury, and Bonaparte would often laughingly joke her upon her intimacies with them; but had he believed such things, he would never have mentioned them, even in jest, and she gave him in reality no cause of complaint.

When Napoleon determined on quitting Egypt, she alone was apprized of so important a resolution. With much grief she was convinced of the impossibility of following him through the chances of a dangerous journey. "I may be taken," said he, when in tears she petitioned to attend him, promising to brave every difficulty, a promise she would religiously have observed. "I may be taken by the English; my honour must be dear to you; and what would they say to find a woman at my elbow?" After his departure, Egypt was to her but a vast desert. Napoleon had left orders with Kléber, to ship off, with as little delay as possible, certain persons whom he named. I have already reported how these orders were executed with respect to my husband and brother-in-law. Poor Bellilotte met with no better fate, and being a woman, felt it more acutely. Kléber, who, in spite of a stature of six feet, and great military talent, was sometimes mean and pitiful in his notions, delighted in the power of tyrannizing over a woman who had been the mistress of Bonaparte, and in preventing his friends from joining him; but Desgenettes, ever ready to assist the unhappy, conceiving the distress of Madame

Fourès, deprived of her defender, and exposed to the vengeance of a man who loved her, and whose jealousy must produce vexations, perhaps dangerous consequences, came to her assistance, and interposed so effectually with Kléber for the delivery of the passport, that Madame Fourès immediately obtained it, and sailed for France, where she found her Egyptian friend in circumstances which gave him new claims on her affection. Napoleon was, however, but newly reconciled to Josephine, and was too deeply immersed in serious and important labours to admit of any distraction. Though indifferent to Josephine, his attachment for her had once been sufficient to enable her to replace, in his imagination at least, a connexion that might have afforded him happiness. Bellilotte was therefore discarded: from Duroc, who was especially charged with the disposal of her fate, I know the internal struggles which this decision cost Napoleon; but her name was Josephine's most effective weapon in all their domestic quarrels, and she would have allowed him neither peace nor respite had she once learned that Madame Fourès had a house in Paris. Napoleon, anxious above all things to avoid publicity, recommended a house out of town. And Pauline, ever resigned to the wishes of him she loved, hired or purchased a cottage at Belleville near the Pré-Saint-Gervais, where she lived at the time Junot pointed her out to me at the *Comédie*.

Fourès also returned from Egypt, and the divorce pronounced abroad being invalid at home unless confirmed within a limited time, which had now elapsed, he reclaimed his wife, who refused his demand; and long and angry debates arose, which, reaching the ears of the First Consul, he, with some harshness, ordered the unfortunate wife to marry again; an opportunity offered in the person of M. Ramchouppe, who was enamoured of her, and Bonaparte promised a consulate for the conclusion of the affair. She consulted her old patron, M. de Sales, who was now practising with credit as an advocate at Paris, and who still entertained a warm friendship for Bellilotte as well as for Fourès. She finally determined, contrary to his judgment, to marry M. Ramchouppe, and set out with her new husband for his consulate.

For many years nothing was heard of her; but on learning the captivity of Napoleon, and the torture he was suffering in exile, where his wretched jailor suffered him to perish, the noble and exalted soul of Pauline rose superior to fear and prejudice. She realized part of her remaining property, and sailed from port to port anxiously watching an opportunity to go to Saint Helena, and to attempt the deliverance of him who had ever been dear to her as

her best friend, and religiously sacred as personifying the glory of her country.

Her plan was some time organizing, and no sooner was it completed, than Napoleon's death crushed all her swelling hopes. Vengeance and hatred had been more prompt than attachment and fidelity could execute. Pauline was in Brazil when the news reached her; where she may be now I know not, but in whatever quarter of the globe, should this book meet her eye, I could wish that it may convey to her the expression of my admiration and gratitude for a feeble woman, whose courage and feeling prompted an undertaking which men had not heart enough even to attempt.

CHAPTER LV.

Awakening and nocturnal sally of Junot—The Adjutant Laborde—Chevalier's machine—Accomplices and informers—Attempts against the First Consul's life—Difficult arrest—The madmen—Conspiracies—Secrets imparted to Caffarelli—Lavoisier—Poverty a bad counsellor—The rule and its exceptions—Description of the machine—Maxim of the First Consul—The military family.

Some days after my marriage I found Junot depressed and abstracted, visiting the Prefect of Police several times a day, often awakened in the night by an old adjutant called Laborde, who came to make reports, which seemed to be of great importance; he once got up at three o'clock in the morning, dressed himself, and sallied out on foot with this man, although the cold was excessive, and he had been suffering all day with a violent headache, which had entirely deprived him of appetite. But the interests at stake were very dear, and all else was forgotten. At length, on the 7th November, he appeared more calm, and told me that the First Consul had just escaped a danger which must have been followed by the most disastrous consequences; for, not only the plan, if executed, must have succeeded, but all the neighbouring inhabitants would have been its victims. This was the infernal machine of Chevalier, a prelude to the conspiracy of the 23d December. Chevalier, whose name is almost the only one connected with this affair, was far from being its sole contriver. Men named Bousquet, Gombaud-Lachaise, Desforge, Guérauld, and a Madame Bucquet, were arrested at the same time,

and, with Chevalier, confined in the Temple. This machine, which Chevalier was constructing, was seized in a chamber, which he shared with a man named Veycer, in a house called the house of the Blancs-Manteaux. He had left his former lodging because all the police of Paris were in search of him.

Veycer, his fellow labourer, was at first his comrade, and afterwards, whether through remorse, or by means of seduction, was induced to assist in his arrest. It was apprehended that Chevalier, finding himself lost, might, in a moment of despair, set fire to the combustibles around him, and blow up with himself the house and all that it contained. Veycer's business was to prevent this; but Chevalier, as was natural to the part he was playing, was extremely suspicious. On retiring to rest he fastened his door with an oaken bar, and had always at hand a pair of excellent and well-loaded pistols; all this his bedfellow was aware of, and not unmindful of his own safety.

On the eve of Chevalier's arrest, the progress of his machine was at a stand for want of money; and Bousquet, who appears to have been hitherto the banker of the diabolical enterprise, was equally without funds. Veycer was despatched in quest of money, which of course was not difficult to procure, as only six or eight francs were wanted. He brought them late at night, so that nothing could be undertaken till the morning. Chevalier's confidence in his comrade (whose real name was not Veycer, and whom I shall simply call the comrade) was strengthened by this new service, and he slept amidst crackers and cartridges as tranquilly as if surrounded by roses. The comrade had little difficulty in persuading him not to burn a light, so that the room was in perfect darkness, and to this circumstance he owed his safety; for on hearing the first shake of the door by the police agents, he sprang forward to remove the bar that opposed them, and Chevalier, perceiving that he was betrayed, fired a pistol, which lodged its contents in the wall, but would not have missed the comrade had there been a light. This arrest took place at two in the morning of the 7th November, a date impressed on my memory by the circumstance, that had my mother's intended ball that evening taken place, with so many of those wretches about the town, who went by the name of the *madmen*, and had been agitating for three months past, the probable consequences of their learning that the First Consul was about to spend a part of the night, unguarded, at a private house, where, on entering or returning, his person was so much more accessible than amidst the crowds that surround a public spectacle, could not but make both my mother and myself shudder.

The sect called the *Enragés*, was composed of the very dregs of the worst days of the Revolution. The cleverest of them, and their ringleader, was one Moses Bayle, formally a conventionalist, who headed the attempt on the vaults of the Tuileries, opposite the *Vigier* baths, when the first grating yielded; but the second, having a stronger lock, set force at defiance. The same party, under the same leader, attempted to assassinate the First Consul before the affair of Ceracchi and Aréna. This conspiracy, which had been framed almost unknown to the police, so completely were its authors protected by their insignificance, was discovered by an honest man whom they would willingly have made an accomplice; but, revolting at the enormity of the project, he sought out General Caffarelli, aide-de-camp to the First Consul, and revealed to him the whole affair. This man's name owes its preservation chiefly to its similarity to one of great celebrity, Lavoisier. Paris was at this time infested with swarms of pardoned Chouans, and other vagabonds of all descriptions, who conspired against the First Consul's life, not for the sake of liberty, but because so terrible a catastrophe would throw all Paris into confusion, and enable them to restore the horrors of the 10th of August and 2d of September. But it was the opinion both of Junot and Fouché, who agreed on this point alone, that other heads controlled, and other counsels animated the machinations, of which these illiterate and half-armed banditti were made to appear the sole contrivers. Since the First Consul had been in power, more than ten obscure conspiracies had been discovered; and he, with the same greatness of mind which never afterwards deserted him, enjoined the authorities not to divulge them.

"They would lead the nation to suppose that the state is not tranquil, nor must we allow foreigners this momentary triumph; they would easily take advantage of it, and it shall not be."

The First Consul was in the right; the English, for instance, would have sufficiently magnified such attempts, with which they were, no doubt, too well acquainted, yet dared not precede our own journals in the announcement of them.

It is, however, a positive fact, that nothing could be more tranquil than the interior of France. The First Consul was idolized, for the word beloved is too feeble, by the entire population of Paris, and his assassins, if known, could not fail of being massacred by the people. Who were the prime movers of all these conspiracies? Ruined men, gamesters; not only destitute of fortune, but overwhelmed with debts, and resolved, at any price, to acquire a power which they only deemed misplaced in the hands of General Bonaparte, because he was

rigorous in the choice of magistrates, ministers, and all the officers of government. I know there are persons who might be named in refutation of this last assertion; but they are small in number, and the pre-eminent talents of their possessors may supply me with an answer. It is not less a fact, that from his elevation to the Consulate, during the happy years that preceded the Empire, he employed, as far as possible, only men of probity and good character. The Council of State, the senate, the tribunal, as yet in its infancy, the ministers, the whole national organization, was the work of the First Consul, and proved the truth of my observation.

Under such a government, Demerville, Topino-Lebrun, Ceracchi, Moses Bayle, Chevalier, and their fellows, could have little hope of rising; the course they adopted therefore was merely staking their last rouleau on the chance of power; and it is remarkable that all these conspiracies fell to the ground for want of funds to purchase poniards, pistols, powder, &c.

There are some young heads, and others which, more gray, approach nevertheless nearly to infancy, in their ignorance of the deplorable events that marked the progress of our unhappy revolution, who will question the poverty of these men, and persuade themselves that the poor must, as a corollary, be honest and virtuous; but practical experience teaches us, on the contrary, that in a corrupt community (and I hope we make no pretensions to being otherwise), poverty is so rarely allied to virtue and probity, that the exception, when found, serves but to confirm the rule, which is, that the absolutely poor and wretched are capable of every wickedness; and as a proof, was any man, possessed of the simple means of living, ever known to turn highway robber? he will only pursue this road to eternal perdition for the sake of bread. But in my designation of the poor and wretched, I by no means include those who gain their livelihood by persevering labour; such a man is estimable, however mean may be his occupation.

I heard the whole history of Chevalier's affair from the old Adjutant Laborde, who came the next morning to relate it to Junot; and also from Doucet, chief of the staff of Paris. The little machine was brought for Junot's inspection. It was a small cask filled with crackers, and balls containing seven or eight pounds of powder. It was bound at each extremity with two hoops of iron, and near the middle was introduced a gun-barrel, having the trigger strongly attached to the cask with pieces of iron. This machine was to have been placed on the road of the First Consul. Fireworks were to have been thrown in all directions to increase the disorder; while

chevaux-de-frise, manufactured by a locksmith, who was taken into custody, being placed in the adjacent streets, were to prevent the arrival of troops, and thus give time to men, capable of so diabolical a conception, to commit their meditated crimes.

Junot especially recommended me not to mention this affair to any of my mother's associates; and so well did I obey his instructions, that my mother knew nothing of the matter till the 2d December. I soon indeed accustomed myself to hear almost mechanically matters of the utmost importance discussed; a habit that was common to me as well as to all the young wives of my time, whose husbands were continually about the Chief of the State, or engaged in highly confidential transactions. The first time that I dined at the Tuileries, I was placed, as a bride, next to the First Consul; the Duchess de Montebello, then Madame Lannes, was seated on the other side; it was about a week after this discovery; he asked me if I had mentioned it to my mother, I answered "No, for I was unwilling to give her uneasiness; and besides," added I, "Junot tells me such things must be talked of as little as possible."—"Junot is right," added he; "I myself have recommended it to him. It is now no secret, as beyond a doubt the arrest of Chevalier is pretty generally known; but I do not wish explanations, sought for more from curiosity than interest, by persons so nearly connected with me as Junot." And he added, "As for you, Madame Junot, now that you make a part of the family of my staff, you must *see*, *hear*, *and forget* (vous devez *tout voir*, *tout entendre*, *et tout oublier*). Have this device engraved on a seal. But I remember that you can keep a secret." He alluded to the affair of Salicetti.

CHAPTER LVI.

Garat, and the ridiculous cravats—Haydn's Oratorio—Brilliant assemblage at the Opera—Junot's dinner with Berthier, the 23d December—General security and extraordinary noise—The First Consul at the Opera, and Duroc at the door of my box—The infernal machine—M. Diestrich, aide-de-camp to Vandamme—Return from the Opera—My presence at the Tuileries the evening of the 23d December—Remarkable scenes—Danger of Madame Bonaparte—Involuntary tears—Correct details relative to the infernal machine—Exaggeration of the number of victims—Junot's coachman, and danger avoided—Agreement of Fouché and Junot—Junot's nightmare—My life in danger.

My mother's health was strikingly improved since my marriage. Contrary to my brother's inclinations, as well as mine, she had called in a new physician, named Vigaroux, the son of a skilful surgeon of Montpellier, and he seemed to work wonders. He engaged to cure her in six months, and she was sure enough relieved from pain. She was handsomer, and her complexion clearer, than it had been for ten years. She dined with me, went to plays, was gadding about on visits the whole morning, and far from feeling fatigued; indeed, she was the better for all this exertion.

Garat, one of my mother's oldest and most assiduous acquaintances, came one day to entreat our attendance at the Opera on the 23d December, to hear Haydn's fine oratorio of the Creation, which he, jointly with Steibelt had arranged, and in which he was to take a part. My mother, who was passionately fond of good music, and of Garat's singing, readily promised a compliance. She was to sit in my box; and as Junot dined with Berthier, the new Minister of War, it was settled that I should dine with her ready dressed, and Junot would join us after dinner.

My toilet completed, for the evening, I entered the carriage with my brother-in-law, and we found my mother beautiful, gay, and enchanting. She was splendidly dressed in black velvet and diamonds, and no one would have supposed her of the age of sixty-two.

We dined early; my mother ordered her horses while we took coffee, and we set out immediately afterwards. It was seven when we arrived at the Opera. The house was crowded, and being well

lighted, and the ladies in full dress, the spectacle was very brilliant.

We distinguished Garat with his opera-glass in his hand, earnestly surveying the boxes, to recognise his acquaintances; and though eight o'clock at night, he sought to catch a gleam of *Aurora*.* He was more ridiculously dressed than usual; no very easy matter. His coat collar stood higher than his head, and his rather monkeyish face was difficult to discern between ells of muslin by way of cravat below, and a forest of curls above.

The instruments were tuned, and this immense orchestra, more numerous than I had ever seen it before, was preparing to treat our oral faculties with Haydn's *chef-d'œuvre*, more perfectly executed than he had ever the gratification of hearing it himself.†

Junot found my mother and me in high spirits, occupied in looking round this magnificent house, and returning the friendly and smiling salutations of our acquaintance. He was himself in a peculiar state of mind. Berthier had been repeating to him a conversation he had held with the First Consul respecting Junot; and his words were so full of kindness and friendship, that Junot was sensibly affected, and his eyes watered while happiness played in smiles on his lips.

Scarcely were thirty bars of the oratorio played, before a violent explosion was heard like the report of cannon.

"What means that?" said Junot, with emotion. He opened the box door, and looked about for one of his officers or aides-de-camp. "It is strange!" said he. "How can the guns be fired at this hour? Besides, I should have known it! Give me my hat," said he to my brother, "I will go and see what it is." Instantly Chevalier's machine occurred to me, and I seized the flaps of Junot's coat, but he looked angrily at me, and impatiently snatched it from my grasp. At this moment the door of the First Consul's box opened, and himself appeared, with Generals Lannes, Berthier, and Duroc.

He smilingly saluted the immense crowds, who mingled almost screams of love with their acclamations. Madame Bonaparte followed

* Garat was particularly intimate with Madame Aurora B———, and was always in company with her and her sister. Both parties frequented Talleyrand's house, and the valet-de-chambre, accustomed to announce them together, would cry with a loud voice, *Mesdames de B—— et M. Garat.* But all things change in this world: so that later these ladies and M. Garat were announced separately; but the habitude was such that more than two years afterwards, Courtiade, when ushering in the two sisters, still called out "*Mesdames de B—— et M. Garat.*"

† Haydn was leader of the music at the chapel of Prince Esterhazy at Vienna; he wished much to visit Paris, but the Prince refused very frequently his permission to let him travel.

in a few seconds, accompanied by Colonel Rapp, Madame Murat, who was near her confinement, and Mademoiselle Beauharnais. Junot was re-entering the box to convince himself of the First Consul's serenity, which I had just remarked upon, when Duroc presented himself with a discomposed countenance, and an air of wildness.

He spoke in whispers to Junot, and we heard nothing of his communication; but at night Junot repeated it to me. "I love Duroc; he is almost as much attached to the First Consul as Marmont and myself."

Duroc's words sufficiently explain the disturbed condition in which he appeared.

"The First Consul has just escaped death," said he hastily to Junot; "go to him, he wishes to speak to you, but be calm. It is impossible the event should remain unknown here a quarter of an hour; but he wishes to avoid being himself the means of spreading such intelligence: so, come with me, and let me lean on you arm, for I tremble all over. My first battle agitated me less."

During the short conference of the two friends the oratorio had commenced; but the fine voices of Mesdames Branchu and Walbourne, and that of Garat, could not absorb the attention of the audience. All eyes were turned towards the First Consul, and he alone at this moment occupied two thousand hearts. As I have before observed, I had said nothing to my mother of Chevalier's infernal machine; but my brother-in-law knew the whole affair, and I whispered a word in his ear, to dispatch him in search of news. I felt a presentiment of some misfortune. The moment Duroc spoke to Junot, the latter turned pale as a spectre, and I perceived him raise his hand to his forehead with a gesture of surprise and despair; but being unwilling to disturb my mother and the people in the adjoining boxes, I contented myself with whispering M. Junot for intelligence. But before his return we had heard all. A low murmur began to spread from the stage to the orchestra, the pit, and the boxes. "The First Consul has just been attacked in the Rue Saint-Nicaise."*

The truth soon circulated throughout the theatre, when simultaneously, and, as it were, by an electric shock, one unanimous acclamation was heard; one universal glance seemed to shield Napoleon with protecting love. What I here relate I was eye-witness to; more

* This street no longer exists; and the Opera-house was destroyed after the assassination of the Duc de Berri, to make room for the chapel intended to be erected in commemoration of this last murderous act; the chapel was nearly finished, but has, since the revolution of 1830, been pulled down, and the materials sold.

than two-thirds of those who attended the Opera on that evening are probably yet living in Paris; it may be they dare not be the first to declare the events of that moment; but I appeal to them, let them answer whether I retrace not with fidelity the feelings of the audience. How tumultuous was the agitation which preceded the burst of national resentment! for in the first quarter of an hour, the nation was represented by that crowd, whose indignation against so foul an attempt no words are capable of expressing. Women were seen choking with sobs, men trembling with rage; all united heart and hand to prove that in such circumstances no political differences can create a difference in the code of honour. Meanwhile I was engaged in observing the First Consul's box, which being immediately below me, enabled me to see and hear nearly all that passed in it. He was calm, and appeared only warmly affected, when the general murmur conveyed to his ear any strong expression of the public feeling. Madame Bonaparte was not equally mistress of her feelings. Her whole frame was disordered; even her attitude, always so graceful, was no longer her own. She seemed to tremble, and to be desirous of sheltering herself under her shawl—the very shawl which had saved her life. She wept: notwithstanding all her efforts to repress her tears, they were seen trickling down her pale cheeks, and when she looked towards the First Consul her shivering fit returned. Her daughter too was much disturbed. As for Madame Murat, the character of the family shone in her demeanour; although her situation might have excused the display of an anxiety and distress so natural in the sister of the First Consul, she was, throughout this trying evening, perfectly composed.

Junot having received the orders of the First Consul, returned to desire we would not wait for him, and immediately left us to enter upon his duty. The Prefect of Police, whose box was next to mine, had long since quitted it, and hastened to the prefecture. When Junot was gone, my mother, who was now acquainted with the whole affair, told me that a young man of a military appearance, in the box beside me, had just told the ladies who occupied it, that the conspirators had at first intended to lay their train at the door of the Opera, in which case the entire theatre would have been blown up; and she desired me to look at him, and tell her whether he were deserving of credit. It was M. Diestrich, aide-de-camp to General Vandamme; and the ladies in the box were his mother and sister. I had once seen him at my own house on Junot's reception-days, and had met him two days before at General Mortier's. I begged him to tell me whether there was any new misfortune to be dreaded. "It is difficult," said he, "to

answer that question. Death has been averted from the whole assemblage within these walls, only by the observance of a general regulation that no carriage of any description shall be suffered to remain at the door of a theatre the first night of a new piece. "But," added M. Diestrich, lowering his voice, "none of the authors of this infamous crime are yet arrested; who can answer that a second blow may not be prepared against the First Consul, at the moment of his leaving the theatre, the first having failed? As for myself, I am come to fetch my mother and sister, and when I have seen them safely home I shall return, for the arm of a man is always necessary in a tumult."—"I will go, too," said my mother, "this gentleman is perfectly right; give me my shawl, put on your own and let us go;" and she continued urging my departure, and even wrapped me in my furs. My partiality for General Bonaparte, and especially that passion for his glory which made me as sensitive to his triumphs as if he had been my brother; that enthusiasm which induced me to consider the interests of France and Napoleon as identified, had frequently incurred my mother's reproaches. This evening she had seen me weep, and knew that I was really distressed, but did not fully comprehend the object of my present anxiety. My tears, I will not deny, were called forth by horror at a crime of such enormity as would condemn its perpetrators to the execration of all succeeding ages; but at that moment I was in a state of violent perturbation, at the thought that Junot was encountering unknown dangers, so much the more alarming, that the wretches who were thus resolutely bent on the First Consul's destruction, could only reach him by the sacrifice of his most faithful adherents. This idea tortured me. I knew that my mother would go, but for myself I would fain know Junot's proceedings and keep him in sight. I thought the First Consul's side his most probable station at such a moment. It was not his duty to be running through the narrow alleys of Paris, hunting the conspirators from their lurking-places, and I might reasonably suppose he would not be far from the Opera-house. While I lingered, ruminating on these reflections, Junot opened the box-door, and hastily said: "Go with your mother; after setting her down, borrow her carriage to convey you to Madame Bonaparte's; I shall be there, and will take you home;" and away he ran. In spite of the excessive cold, he was covered with perspiration.

My brother-in-law accompanied us, and having set down my mother, we proceeded to the Tuileries. The First Consul was returned from the Opera, and every thing appeared as calm as if nothing had happened; but in the saloon things wore a different aspect. Several of the authorities were assembled, the Ministers, the Consuls,

the Commandant of Paris, General Mortier, Commandant of the Division, etc. The First Consul, who had hitherto appeared indifferent to all the attempts against him, showed this time no indulgence, and he had good reason. Madame Bonaparte was quite overpowered; she cried incessantly. Independently of the danger the First Consul had so narrowly escaped, she had herself nearly fallen a victim to the explosion. As she was stepping into the carriage, Rapp, who was not usually so observant of the perfect agreement of colours in a lady's dress, observed to her that her shawl neither matched her gown nor her jewels. Her perfect elegance in the adjustment of all the accessories of the toilet, is well known, and she returned to repair the oversight. Scarcely did it detain her three minutes, yet these sufficed for separating her carriage from that of the First Consul, which it was to have followed close. This delay saved her. The explosion took place just as Madame Bonaparte's carriage reached the Carrousel: its windows were broken, and pieces of the glass fell on the neck and shoulders of Mademoiselle Beauharnais, who sat on the front seat of the carriage, and her shawl did not defend her from some slight wounds. I cannot adequately describe the impression which this outrage created throughout France; to Bonaparte it afforded the conviction that he might demand any thing of the people by whom he was beloved to such excess. I saw, and have still before me the daily reports made by the military police to Junot. These reports were not designed for public inspection, but they contained proofs of attachment and national devotion, the abuse of which may imply in some degree a criminality in Napoleon.

It is well known that the barrel containing the powder and charge (and which resembled those borne by the water-carriers), was placed on a crazy little cart, drawn by a mare, and so stationed as to impede the road. It was intended, while in the act of removal by the guards, to explode by internal machinery, and destroy every thing within reach. It was afterwards said, that the rapidity of his carriage alone had saved the First Consul, and no doubt this circumstance had its share in his deliverance; but the real cause of it was the result of mere chance. The piquet of Chasseurs escorting the First Consul, preceded and followed the carriage. One of the foremost, perceiving that an old cart obstructed the way, called to the driver to get on one side; but seeing no one (for Saint-Régent, who lighted the train, was concealed behind a palisade),* he struck the mare smartly on the

* At the period of this tragic event, the Place du Carrousel and the adjacent streets were totally different to what we see them now: improvements were then going on, and palisades of lofty boards were at every corner. It was behind one

haunches with the flat of his sabre, which set her in motion, and advancing three or four steps, she seems to have deranged the packthread, which, by opening a valve, was to admit air and cause the explosion. The consequent delay was but momentary, yet it sufficed to ensure the safety of the First Consul, whose carriage had meanwhile turned through the Rue de Malte into the Rue Richelieu, instead of passing through the Rue Saint-Nicaise, where the machine was. The mare was killed, but without any external mark of injury, so that a description of her was every where placarded, and herself deposited at the Prefecture of Police, in order that the public might see and examine her, and perhaps be able to say to whom she formerly belonged.

Such was the violence of the explosion, so terrible the impulsion, that a part of the wheel, and one of the iron bands that encircled the cask, darting across the intervening space from the Rue de Malte to the Hotel d'Elbœuf, and, unarrested even by the lofty height of that hotel, was hurled some distance beyond it.

Curiosity proved fatal to many inhabitants of the Rues Saint-Nicaise and de Malte. Madame Léger, mistress of the Café Apollo, at the corner of the two streets, running to the door, according to her custom, whenever the First Consul was to be seen passing, had both her breasts carried off by one of the hoops of the barrel, and survived but three days.

One of the waiters at the same Café was killed, and the other wounded. The number of the victims has been much exaggerated. I have proofs that on that day the deaths did not exceed nine: they may, including the consequences, have afterwards amounted to twenty-nine or thirty. Great, no doubt; but far less frightful than if we had had to deplore the loss of two thousand people, as would have been the case had not the sentinel peremptorily resisted the placing of the cart at the door of the Opera-house.

Never, perhaps, was Napoleon a more interesting object of observation, than during the hours immediately succeeding this catastrophe.

It was not till my return home at night that I was informed of Junot's share in the danger. On his road to the Opera, from the Ministry of War, which was then at the Hotel d'Avray, Rue de Lille,

of these palisades that the poor little ignorant chimneysweep had hidden himself in order to set fire to the train of powder: his name was Saint-Régent. By the explosion of the machine, he received some violent contusions, and was thrown across the street: the surgeon who picked him up immediately afterwards and dressed his wounds, was arrested, and suspected of being a party concerned in the infernal attempt.

passing under the arch of the Carrousel, he recollected that it was only seven, and the First Consul would not have set out. Desirous, therefore, of expressing to him the gratitude with which his heart was overflowing, he ordered his coachman to stop at the Tuileries; but the restiveness of his young and spirited horses (we drove at that time the finest in Paris), frustrated this scheme. They were going with tremendous rapidity, and the coachman found it impossible to stop them till it became necessary to have made a very awkward turn, and to have again passed a narrow part of the street. Junot, therefore, with some signs of impatience, relinquished his design, and again gave the word "to the Opera." Had he alighted at the Tuileries, Napoleon's carriage being full,* he must have followed in his own; and the train of guards, the last of whom had his horse killed, would most certainly have been blown up. No one, however, appeared sensible of the danger he had escaped but myself and the coachman, who for more than a year could not pass the Place du Carrousel without a shudder.

All the authorities, the corporations, the tribunals, evey thing that could call itself constituted, or wore the appearance of a body, congratulated the First Consul, and entreated him, as a favour, to pay more attention to his personal safety. The Council of State, with Boulay de la Meurthe at the head of its deputation, demanded especially that he would take measures for the maintenance of public order. But the most remarkable address was that of the city of Paris. This unfortunate city saw her interests at stake, exposed as she was to become the victim of a few obscure miscreants, who cared not if, in the accomplishment of their own criminal views, they brought destruction on some thousands of unoffending citizens.

It was Etienne Majean, Secretary-General of the department of the Seine, at the head of the Mayors and of the General Council, who spoke, instead of Frochot, then Prefect, who was too seriously ill to exercise his functions. Contemporary memoirs have made the Prefect present the mayors to the First Consul, and have quoted his speech on the occasion. The question may or may not be indifferent; but knowing the truth, I report it.

The next day, 2d of December, the agitation of Paris was extreme. The heinous nature of the plot was known overnight, but its details were not generally understood till the morning; and I cannot too often repeat, that the indignation they excited was universal, and the interest manifested for the First Consul beyond expression.

* Lauriston, aide-de-camp on duty, Lannes, commanding the guards, and Berthier, Minister of War, were all three with Napoleon.

It may be well imagined that all the authorities, civil and military, were at once in a state of activity, requiring no other stimulation.

Opinions differed upon the direction the researches should take. Junot and Fouché, who did not usually agree on police measures, could not convert the First Consul to their persuasions that the actuating spring of all these frequent atrocities had its pivot at once in France, and at a distance from it. Napoleon was of a different opinion. "They are the work," he said, "of those same *Enragés*, who embrace in their number a multitude of Septembrisers," and nothing could shake this idea. Yet it was notorious that these men were but the outcasts of a party, and the catspaws of their secret instigators.

"A handful of wretches, who have calumniated liberty by the crimes they have committed in her name, these are the guilty parties," said the First Consul. Dubois would not contradict him, for it was evident he thought with Junot and Fouché. Fouché replied, "These are fellows incapable of conceiving. They execute as the horse did, who drew the machine, but can go no further. It would be useless were I to run after these men of the Abbaye-aux-Bois.* Only leave me time, and I will unravel many things."

For two days Junot scarcely allowed himself an instant's repose. He would not intrust to subalterns a commission so important as the pursuit of the agents in so atrocious an enterprise. He rose almost before daybreak, and from the head-quarters of the garrison directed himself every thing that fell under his jurisdiction. The activity, intelligence, and honourable devotedness of his coadjutor, M. Doucet, Chief Adjutant-general of the garrison, cannot be too highly praised.

At ten o'clock in the evening of the 5th, Junot came home, overcome with fatigue, and though he had promised to fetch me from my mother's, could not rally his faculties from the drowsiness which oppressed them.

On my arrival, my femme-de-chambre told me he was gone to bed, and had requested I would wish him good night. Accordingly I entered my chamber, and finding him in a deep sleep, leaned over him, and said, "What! already asleep!" His nights, generally restless, were at this anxious period disturbed by frightful dreams; and at the moment I spoke he was dreaming that he was in the cabinet of the First Consul, which was filled with conspirators, one of whom was in the act of firing a machine. My words had partly roused him, and the fire-light favouring the illusion of his dream, he awoke much agitated.

* The Abbaye-aux-Bois, situated in the Faubourg Saint-Germains, was the principal place for the meetings of the conspirators at that time: it is now a retreat for ladies of small income.

CHAPTER LVII.

My visits to the Tuileries after the 2d of December—Conversation with the First Consul—Inutility of an additional victim—Bonaparte's opinion of my mother's drawing-room—His condemnation of the emigrants—M. Roger de Damas, term of comparison in bravery—The horse and the cloak—Madame Murat at the Hotel de Brionne—Promenade to Villiers—M. Bandeloeque and Madame Frangeau—*We are not rich*—The First Consul's opinion of the contrivers of the infernal machine—The Republicans and the Enragés—Remarkable scene at Malmaison—Animated discussion between Bonaparte and Fouché—Enumeration of contemporary crimes—Madame Bonsparte, and the conciliatrice rejected—Continuation and conclusion of a long discussion between Fouché and the First Consul—*The Turk and the French soldier*—Metge and his arrest—The tribune Duveyrier—Special tribunal—Portalis at Malmaison—The preamble of the Civil Code—Junot's papers.

IMMEDIATELY after the explosion of the infernal machine, we were more than commonly assiduous in our attendance at the Tuileries; my mother herself pressed it upon me, and often, when desirous of my company, would sacrifice it to send me to the palace. "Be very particular," said she, "to express to General Bonaparte the distress which this horrible affair has occasioned me. No set speeches, such as you would address to a tribunal or a council of state, but depict in its true colours all that I suffered on the evening and night of the 2d of December."

It was easy for my mother to talk of what displeased her in the First Consul; but she had watched his growth from childhood to maturity, and nature overpowered that petty rancour to which the superior mind and generous soul of my mother would never have given admission, but to disguise the just dignity of offended friendship. She was attached to Napoleon; more than once she repented her severity towards one whom she loved as the son of one of her dearest friends. The attempt of the assassination made her shudder; she wept violently on her return home, and in the night had a violent access of fever, which made her very ill for two days.

When I acquitted myself of her commission to the First Consul, his answer was of a nature to have confounded any one less acquainted with his character than I was.* He looked me steadily in the face;

* It was at one of the quintidian dinners after the attempt, I think the 15th; for I am certain it was not the 5th following.

fixed on me that piercing and fiery eye, which by its quick and earnest expression, neutralized those it encountered, and desired me to repeat my mother's message.

"I have had the honour, General, of expressing to you, in my mother's name, the lively interest she felt in the incidents of the 2d. She hopes you do not doubt her sincerity."

"Yet she ran away, and you too, before the end of the oratorio."

I made no reply; but looked at General Bonaparte with an expression which he probably interpreted literally; for he added, withdrawing his gaze from me, and turning towards the window, although it was night, and nothing could be seen in the palace court, "To be sure it would have availed nothing towards my safety, had any peril awaited me, that one more victim should have exposed herself to it."

"Let me add, General, that in the eyes of my mother, it was her daughter who was in danger; in mine, it was my mother. We mutually owed regard to each other's safety; for myself, I can say nothing approaching to exaggeration, when I affirm that I left the Opera with the greatest reluctance; for I knew that Junot must partake the danger that threatened his General, and this idea was painful to me; but I could not suffer my mother to abide the hazard without being in some degree criminal."

"Yes, yes; undoubtedly, undoubtedly," answered the First Consul, with inflection of voice it would be impossible to describe; "I am altogether ridiculous to have used such an inadvertent expression, for you must call it so; I know in your mother's society every thing is acceptable that may make me appear in an unfavourable light."

"General," replied I, much hurt that he persisted in the belief that my mother's drawing-room was a focus for the dissemination of hatred against him, "how can I convince you? It can be accomplished only by one means, and that is in the power of God alone; it is, that the accent of truth may reach your heart. I have much hope in that truth which cannot be feigned. I have the honour to tell you, Citizen Consul, that never has a word to your prejudice been uttered in my mother's drawing-room but either herself or my brother has instantly assumed the prerogative of their own house, to impose silence on the holders of language which my mother's friendship for you, and for all your family, would interdict, even though it were the language of truth; for the friendship of my mother," proceeded I, with warmth, and almost angry, "is not of that commonplace species that may be lightly sacrificed to complaisance."

"Ah!" said the First Consul, "you admit, then, that persons inimical to me are received into your mother's drawing-room!"

"I have spoken with frankness, General, and shall continue to do so. Unquestionably, among my mother's acquaintances are some who are unfriendly to the present government; I pretend neither to blame nor absolve them. I know that they are suffering the consequences of a long exile, that their property is confiscated, that most of them are in indigence, that many still groan under the ban which has been fulminated against them; but all these evils are not ascribable to you, and to resent them upon you would be equally unjust and absurd. But, on the other hand, I believe also—" I stopped, and half smiling, looked at the First Consul, who continued my sentence,—"that I should be unjust in my turn, if I obliged them to cry, *Vive la République!* Is not that your meaning, Madame Junot? But if they do not like that word, why do they return to France? Who recalls them? They are not wanted in any branch of the administration. Fouché and Chaptal will be quite as good ministers as M. le Comte d'Entraigues, and Junot and Lannes will command my soldiers as well as M. Roger de Damas, brave as he is."*

"But, General," answered I, "is not our native soil the property of all her children? Cannot a Frenchman return home without the inducement of a place? Is there not an attraction infinitely more powerful? I know there is, by the experience my own family presents; my uncle, M. Comnène, is returned to France, to live in peace and in the hope of a better futurity. And he certainly did not want confidence in your generosity, for he re-entered France without a passport, without even an encouraging word; and as he was far from expecting to find his niece the bride of one of your generals, he reckoned only on the magnanimity of the goverment towards a man who surrenders himself."

"Your uncle does not like me, and I may add, he does not like the Republic; besides, he emigrated, and I consider all emigrants in the light of parricides. Nevertheless, I have complied with Junot's

* Whenever the bravery of the emigrants was Napoleon's topic, M. Roger de Damas was always the example. He related a certain story, which I never heard but from him, about the head of a horse enveloped in a cloak, and a leap into the sea, horse and rider; Quiberon was the theatre. But as it was neither easy to follow Bonaparte in his narrative, nor to extract from him a repetition, I never very exactly understood the particulars of this anecdote. All that I could gather from it was, that M. Roger de Damas, seeing himself on the point of being taken, had wrapped his horse's head in his cloak, that the animal might not be sensible of his danger, and striking the spurs into his sides, had made him leap into the sea. I made inquiries of a person who had served in Condé's army, and he assured me the circumstance was true, but had not happened at Quiberon. I give it as I heard it, and that was from Napoleon.

demands in favour of M. de Comnène; for," added he, "Madame Permon carefully avoids presenting a petition to me, even in favour of her brother."

This was true; my mother had said, "If he be so disposed, he will do it for Junot; and if not, what good can my interference effect?"

My mother was, however, mistaken; the General would never have refused to Madame Permon what the First Consul of the Republic might, perhaps, have thought it inconsistent with his duty to grant to General Junot.

I remember that the same day the First Consul talked to me of all my family; inquired whether my grandmother was still living; what was become of my uncle the Abbé de Comnène; he also spoke of my brother, and his friendly intentions towards him. Junot's relations were not mentioned; he spoke only of my own.

As I have before said, I went often to Madame Bonaparte; Madame Murat, who was every moment expecting her confinement, was also a frequent visitor, and I never met her without pleasure. She was unaffected, a dutiful daughter, a fond wife, and every way interesting.

One day I visited her at the Hotel de Brionne,* where she was then living; she occupied the ground floor, and M. Benezeck, with all his family, the first. I found her getting into her carriage for a ride to Villiers (Neuilly), which the First Consul had just given her, and she proposed my accompanying her, to which I acceded, and we set out, having the precaution to take Madame Frangeau with us, lest an accident should befall her patient by the road.

Madame Frangeau was the favourite of Baudelocque, and could recount the minutiæ of the youth, maturity, and declining age of her patron, with commentaries and additions which each recital magnified by half; will not the simple mention of her name recall to the Queen of Naples, the Queen of Holland, the Duchess de Frioul, and to all the young mothers of that day, who, like myself, were subjected to her six weeks' thraldom, her gown of the fashion of the regency, and her whimsically antiquated head-dress, oddly contrasted with finery in the style of 1800?

This little ride to Villiers dwells on my mind, because so excessive was our mirth at Madame Frangeau's stories, that at one moment I

* This house has since been pulled down. It was situated in the old court of the Tuileries, opposite the entrance leading to the Pont Royal. Maret occupied it after Murat.

had fears for Caroline. She, however, thought not of accidents; she was better engaged in devouring ten or twelve large bunches of grapes and two rolls à la Duchesse, which Madame Frangeau had ordered to be put into the carriage. I never saw such an appetite!

"Will you have some?" said she, recollecting at last that all the way from the barriers she had been eating without a companion. But I was just entering on a situation which, with her, was drawing to a close: I could eat nothing, and was subject to perpetual sickness.

After driving round the park of Villiers, and laying in a fresh stock of provisions, for the basket was emptied, we returned home. "The First Consul, in the gift of this country-seat, has been most generous to us," said Caroline; "we are not rich, and if my brother had not added the means of furnishing and supporting the house, it had been useless to us." In aftertimes, when Murat, returning from Italy, undertook the government of Paris, on Junot's departure for Arras, no impossibility of this nature prevented him furnishing and inhabiting the Hotel de Thelusson.

After the explosion of the infernal machine, all France displayed the most lively interest towards the First Cousul; it would be difficult to sum up the unanimous concurrence of testimonials of affection. From all the provinces, from all parts of the Republic, arrived addresses, prayers, and above all recommendations, sometimes harshly worded, that the First Consul should at length adopt measures of personal safety. One cry expressed the universal meaning: *it is the interest of France.*

Our evenings, even after the play, if it were not too late, were spent at Madame Bonaparte's. There we enjoyed the happiness of meeting the First Consul.

His conversation, always attractive by its depth of thought, and that air of originality which reflected from his rich and brilliant imagination, acquired increased interest from the consciousness that at such a moment he could give vent only to ideas of the most direct influence. For this reason I seldom missed the quintidian dinners. In spite of crowd, noise, and bustle, it was easy to hear the conversation of the First Consul with all the men of talent and learning of France. The most profound civilians, the ablest financiers, the most subtle diplomatists, thronged around to hear him, and appeared to be rather taking lessons from him, than imparting their knowledge to a young man, whose pale complexion bore witness to watchings and fatigues far exceeding theirs, though the superiority of years was

greatly on their side. For a just appreciation of the First Consul's character, he should have been listened to at Malmaison, or in Madame Bonaparte's saloon at Paris; but never was he so interesting as at the period I have just sketched, imperfectly indeed, considering the strong and vigorous colouring that should be diffused over such distant reminiscences, when designed for eyes which cannŏt by the aid of personal recollection fill up the feeble outlines of the picture. But my pencil is guided by conviction, and this is much in painting.

We know the First Consul was persuaded the blow had been struck by the Jacobins, or rather by a class of wretches usurping the name of republicans, and meriting only that of *Enragés*, which the police had given them. In fact, neither Thibeaudeau, Daunou, Grégoire, Boissy d'Anglas, nor any who avowed their republican principles before the consulate, were to be found in their ranks. They were obscure rapscallions, instruments of crime stained with blood, the refuse of our fatal epochs of 1793 and 1794. These men, dissatisfied with the return of order, as represented in several reports from the prefect of police for Fructidor and Vendémiaire of the year IX., conspired for the overthrow of the restorative government, under which they could not hope for the revival of anarchy. There was amongst them more than one Babœuf, and the conspiracy of the Camp de Grenelle was every day renewed around the First Consul. But he himself was unjust when he said in the Council of State, "All these evils are the work of the revolutionists; of the Septembrisers."

For a long time he was inconvertible. I remember one day, in a conversation at Malmaison, he maintained his opinion against Fouché, Junot, Cambacérès, and several others. The police had found a clue to the villainy of the machine, and Fouché already exulted; his triumph was complete, when having traced it home, the conspirators were arrested, tried and convicted, and proved to be Chouan chiefs, sent up to Paris by Georges to strike the blow. The First Consul argued good-humouredly, it is true; yet his obstinate contrariety disturbed even the habitual sallow calmness of Cambacérès; he alone was as tranquil as if the question no way affected his life; at one moment only he grew angry.

Fouché asserted, not without reason, that La Vendée, though apparently pacified, still nourished the elements of fire; that insurgent bands occupied all the roads, and that Brittany was uninhabitable.

"Parbleu!" said the First Consul with warmth, "why do you talk of La Vendée and Brittany? You! the Minister of Police! who well know the state both of the north and south of France; you come and talk of La Vendée as the central point towards which it seems all

the attention, all the solicitude of the government, should be directed. What is the news from the right bank of the Rhine? Was he a Vendean, that bandit chief, who committed a robbery of 60,000 francs, by force of arms in Germinal last, in the very heart of France, in the department of the Ourthe? Were those men Vendeans, again, who have just been taken at Chateaudun? They are deserters, led by a woman in man's attire. In the department of Gard, you know that from the month of Germinal to the 10th Nivose, sixty-eight brigands have been arrested. In the Sarre, what do you call that band of Shindareen robbers? In Aveyron, in the Lower Alps, you hear every day of new arrests. What happened only the day before yesterday on the Rouen road? I hope you do not call that an unknown corner? Well, here the diligence is attacked by eight brigands, in spite of an escort of four men commanded by a sergeant seated on the imperial. Are these, again, Vendeans?"

The First Consul was almost in a passion. Fouché, who was not easily discomfited, looked at him, very respectfully no doubt, but nevertheless with an expression that would have exasperated me had I been the First Consul.

"I have the honour to observe, General," said he, "that the brigands who stopped the diligence from Rouen were no other than Chouans, who are themselves only Vendeans in disguise. When the diligence was stopped, the first proceeding, even before firing, was to demand the funds belonging to the Republic, and this, you well know, is precisely the prescribed plan among the western brigands. Hunted and entrapped, as it were, by General Bernadotte, they are driven this way; they are Chouans, I maintain it."

"And I repeat to you, Citizen Minister of the General Police, that you are mistaken; or rather you would have us believe you are mistaken." At this moment Madame Bonaparte, who was tenderly attached to Fouché, and deeply interested in his behalf, came up behind Bonaparte, and passed her hand through his arm; but the First Consul, gently disengaging his arm from his wife's pressure, said to her, without loss of temper but rather peremptorily, "Pray, Josephine, do not interrupt me when I am talking of serious matters."

I shall never forget the disconcerted appearance of Madame Bonaparte, as she slunk back to her seat without even thinking of a reply.

"Yes, Citizen Minister," resumed the First Consul, "I repeat distinctly, that you are mistaken when you pretend that the domestic poison with which the Republic is unhappily infected, has any other origin than that vast conspiracy of robbery and crime, the machinations of a set of miscreants who belong to no party, and would dis-

grace any which might adopt them; but who, ever ready to sell their strength, have for the last fifteen years been eagerly intent on seizing an opportunity of the smallest disturbance to augment and profit by it. Do you believe that the cut-throats of the 2d and 3d of September, or that the executioners of the republican marriages at Nantes, or the men who filled the ditches of Avignon with corpses, the assassins of the prisoners at Versailles, those wretches who for two years waded ankle deep in blood, signing decrees of death against the aged, such as the Abbess of Montmartre at 90,* or young victims at sixteen, such as the maids of Verdun?—Do you believe, sir," and he advanced a pace or two nearer to Fouché—"do you believe that all these men love liberty and the Republic? Can you answer YES? If you do, I for my part shall say NO. I tell you that they are men determined on licentiousness—men who, on the very eve of the massacres I have enumerated, had not wherewith to pay for a loaf, and six months afterwards were living in opulence; because they could, without a symptom of remorse, wear the clothing and sleep in the bed of their victims. You will tell me, perhaps, that some amongst them are still poor: it may be so; but for the most part they have long feasted on bread steeped in blood. I know what I know," added he, shaking his head.

Fouché grew even paler than usual, and had long been visibly desirous of answering the First Consul. When Napoleon turned to the fire and began poking it, according to his custom, Fouché said, in a voice tremulous with passion, although his words were deliberate.

"But, General, you will permit me to tell you, that all the sanguinary horrors of the revolution were not committed by the *Jacobins*, as you call them. You are plainly ignorant of the tragedies of Tarrascon, Beaucaire, Marseilles, and so many other southern towns, theatres of the illustrious deeds of Jesuits and their colleagues; in short, of the royalist assassinations."

The First Consul was still stooping forward, and knocking about a poor log; but at the last words of Fouché he raised himself hastily,

* This was Madame de Montmorency, who was so bent with age, that the inhuman executioner could not perform his office without first straightening her body by force.

This unfortunate lady was both blind and deaf; when interrogated, Fouquier Tinville was obliged to scream to her, as she had been deprived of her ear-trumpet, and failing with all his exertions to make himself heard, she was condemned for having *conspiré sourdement* (conspired privately or *deafly*). When she was in the cart, and breathed the fresh air, she sang with a faint voice the "*Salve Regina*," believing herself restored to liberty.

and returning with the same precipitation was instantly beside the minister.

"Eh! pardieu! what is it that you have just cited? You give me a new advantage; this is the very thing I told you an hour ago. These monsters in human shape, who tuck up the sleeves of their shirts, if they have any, while they cut off heads or throw people into the water, would throw them into an auto-da-fé of the Spanish Inquisition, if the grand inquisitor's service was more profitable than their pillage. Parbleu! I know there were royalist assassinations. I might say they were but reprisals, and that the scenes of Avignon, the massacre of many of whom, young as I then was, I intimately knew, and whose morality I can warrant, might excuse the subsequent excesses; but no, I will not say so, nothing can authorize cruelty, nothing can render crime legitimate. It was not to our glorious revolution that these atrocities owed their birth. All the horrors of 1793 cannot tarnish the dazzling whiteness of her robe, when led by liberty, or rather holding her by the hand as a sister, she came, in 1789, to deliver us from our grievous bondage. Men of bad faith, and enemies of the revolution, can alone confound the events of different periods. All must have their due. But only one opinion can be entertained of murderers and shedders of blood. France has had enough of this *régime*, and anarchy is decidedly held in horror. We must put a stop to the *brigandages* which desolate the interior of the Republic. They are the seedlings of our fatal epochs. Public liberty is menaced, and even already attacked in her most valuable bulwarks. Each member of the great family, called society, is at every instant deprived of the means of existence. Safety is but a name, and the most inoffensive being knows not, on retiring to rest, whether he may breakfast in his own house in the morning. The good Clément de Ris is an instance.* Such things are passing under a system of government which aims at tranquillity and the return of order. All this must come to an end. I know it was the Directory which prepared for us so sorrowful an inheritance, by its detestable organization of the provinces, especially after the first specification of La Vendée. But evils are not repaired by shifting the blame on others. Here are these scoundrels, not content with attacking me, would fain blow up a whole division of Paris. If the sentinel at the Opera had not driven off the barrel, some thousands would have been mutilated and assassinated because these monsters seek my life. I repeat, this must be brought to an end. It is not a moment when the Republic, every where victorious, dictates

* We shall soon see a strange light thrown on this history of Clément de Ris.

laws to her enemies in the very bosom of their own country, that she will suffer herself to be crushed beneath the blows of flagitious profligates, assuming, as if by way of derision, a political pretence. Souls like these have no room for a sentiment so noble as patriotism; but because they rob diligences and tax-gatherers, knowing them to have always a well-furnished chest, therefore the knaves fancy they are making war on the government. This is pitiable!"

"Citizen Consul," replied Fouché, "I can only repeat now what I have had the honour of telling you several times since the 2d of December. I expressed my individual opinion, when I said that so execrable a crime could only have been committed by the enemies rather of mankind, than of the Republic, or your person. They attacked the Convention by force of arms on the 4th of October; they were in permanent conspiracy against the Directory, not because it was a worse government to them than the convention or the committees, but because they are the enemies of all government. I am well aware of all that, Citizen Consul; and from the situation I occupy, I am perhaps better informed than others of all these iniquities; but while I allow, with you, that some hundreds of bandits are spread over the surface of our beautiful France, effecting all the mischiefs we see, I say, that the hell which vomited these demons was not 1793."

The First Consul shrugged his shoulders; "And '*The Soldier and the Turk*' (Le Militaire et le Turc), was that dainty device produced by a pen under the dictation of England, or of all that is most extravagant in demagogical tenets?"

"That point is a main pillar of my argument, Citizen Consul; Metge, the author of the libel you have named, is one of those men whom great epochs always bring upon the stage. He resembles those clappers-in-chief, known for their instrumentality in the success or failure of a new piece; they are engaged in the pay of a certain author for one evening, and of another for the next: the two authors are perhaps enemies, but that signifies nothing to the clapper. It is the same with men of Metge's genus. You are in a sphere, Citizen Consul, from whence you discern none of the sordid shifts of policy. You see none of the *disgusting* parts,—I must use the word; nothing of the contrivance necessary to obviate the too rank odour of all these fetid matters. You have never wanted the services of Metge, and Metge likes you not, because he is sensible that from you he has nothing to expect but imprisonment; therefore his ears opened eagerly to imbibe the fair promises, and his hands to receive the glittering golden guineas that were to guide his pen in the production of that rare chef-d'œuvre, *Le Turc et le Militaire Français.*"

"Come! there you are again with your *English committee!* Truly, I am not fond of England; that is to say, of her cabinet; but I think you are somewhat too unjust towards her."

"Citizen Consul, I am no longer young enough to be hurried away by the heat of prejudice; I draw my conclusions from facts. I have long known Metge, and can retrace my doubts and suspicions to a very distant date. Metge has no means of subsistence, and yet lives luxuriously, at a pretty considerable daily expense, which he pays in ready money. Where does he get this money? He must be in the pay of the enemies of the Republic."

"But is it only England, then, that can dispense bribes for troubling the tranquillity of the state? Suspicions have been strongly awakened against Félix Lepelletier and Antonnelle. Does not Metge associate with these men? Is it not known that he was no stranger to the affairs of Ceracchi, Diana, Demerville, and Aréna? It appears even that the dagger he bore was to serve my turn if I fell in his way. He is a stanch blade though, this Metge; I hear that he defended himself like a lion: where was he taken?"

"In the passage Feydeau: it was very late, and the policemen employed in pursuit of him arrested him at first in the name of the law, without immediately securing his hands; so that he had time to seize a dagger, which he always carried about him, and to strike at the officer of police. He stabbed him several times, but fortunately wounded him only in the hand and wrist. One remarkable circumstance is, that for more than four months past he had not slept two consecutive nights in the same place. He carried on his business in a small room at Montmartre, and here those vile pamphlets were composed, for which he was so benevolently paid—far beyond their value."

Two tribunes entered at this moment, and were received by the First Consul with extraordinary graciousness. The conversation proceeded in the same strain. Duveyrier was one of them; the First Consul conferred with him about a report he was to make in a few days relative to the establishment of special criminal tribunals.

These tribunals were particularly designed for the immediate punishment of the robbers and brigands who infested the roads of the Republic, and were at length beginning to excite commotions in the towns. The First Cousul returned to this subject, and his discourse was admirable.

It was at such moments that he should have been seen and heard; he then exhibited a fire which diffused life and warmth on all around him: I had never before seen him in so splendid a light, and I was

more than astonished at it. It effects upon me was at once seducing like an attractive charm, and strongly agitating from the conclusive and perfectly convincing brevity of his eloquence.

M. Portalis afterwards arrived; the First Consul met him, and taking his hand, led him to Madame Bonaparte. He had a great esteem for him. Portalis was not then afflicted with blindness; his sight was painful, but he did not yet require a guide. The First Consul spoke to him, as soon as he entered, about the preamble of the Code, which had been intrusted to him.

"You are idle, Citizen Portalis," said the First Consul, laughing. "You must make more haste; all the world is crying out after our Code, we must move quick where business is concerned."

"Ah! General," answered the worthy man, laughing in his turn, "you give others credit for your own gift of magic. As for you, you were endowed at your birth; but we, poor simple mortals, must feel our way soberly. Besides, do not you know, General, that our Code has only been a year concocting; and that a code of laws is an immense national monument, which requires time to erect. You have worked at it as well as we, and you know it is a skein not easily unravelled."

"Yes, certainly, certainly," said the First Consul; "but we must advance," he repeated, still; "we must advance: is the preamble ready?"

"The First Consul is well assured that I shall always fulfil, not my duty merely, but far more than my duty, to second his great and noble projects for the happiness of France," replied Portalis; "the preamble is completed."

"Ah! you are a good and excellent Frenchman!" said the First Consul; "well and good! I like such men as you and the brave Duveyrier. I am happy when I see such around me; and so seconded, I cannot do otherwise than well."

This conversation was the first of its kind I had heard the First Consul hold since my marriage; but though struck with admiration of the unconcerned manner in which, at such a crisis, he could discuss matters of life and death, having reference to himself, yet I could not have so accurately recalled his very words, and those of Fouché, had I not found the whole dialogue in writing amongst my husband's papers, which contain others equally curious, and throwing the same light on the characters of the interlocutors.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Lions born at Paris on the anniversary of the 18th Brumaire—Female breakfasts at the Tuileries—Madame de Vaines—The lioness *en couche* and visit to the Ménagerie with Madame Bonaparte—The First Consul joining us at the Botanical Gardens—Marengo the eldest of the lions—Bonaparte and Félix the keeper—The liar caught in the fact, and the crocodiles of the Bosphorus—Reminiscences of Egypt by the First Consul—The Psylli and the serpents.

The important events just narrated have expelled from my memory for a time several anecdotes and facts which happened, not only during the month of *Brumaire*, but on the anniversary of the 18th. One of them was the *accouchement* of the lioness of the Botanical Gardens, who had been delivered at her full time of three whelps, all living.* This was a subject of congratulation for the naturalists, who were thus enabled to observe many particulars relative to this noble animal. Some years since a lioness produced young at the Tower of London, but the circumstance threw no new light on the history of gestation.

I was engaged to breakfast with Madame Bonaparte at the Tuileries. Her custom of inviting young married women, too timid to make themselves agreeable in the society of superior men, was delightful to me. Chatting with Madame Bonaparte, during the perfectly unceremonious repast, upon fashions, and all the little interests of society, these young ladies acquired confidence, and threw off that reserve which the presence of the First Consul was calculated to inspire.

Madame Bonaparte did the honours with grace and vivacity; we were generally five or six, and all of the same age, the mistress of the house excepted. At Malmaison the number was sometimes twelve or fifteen, and the breakfast was served in a small circular saloon looking into the court, and which is now present to my imagination, though I have not entered it these sixteen years. One day, at the Tuileries breakfast, I met Madame Vaines, who was high in favour both with the

* While we are on the subject of beasts naturalizing themselves thus in Republican France, I will add, that the first monkey born there, saw the light in a little semicircular and gilded boudoir to be seen from the quai, and belonging to the hotel Labriffe.

First Consul and Madame Bonaparte, and another person, whose name I forget; all I remember is, that it must have been a female, for men were never admitted to these morning fêtes, the First Consul positively prohibiting it. Madame Bonaparte told us she was going to make a visit to a lying-in lady, and inquired if we would accompany her. We acceded, but begged to know, in our turn, who was the object of our visit. She answered, that to be sure it was a personage who might eat us, but that at present she was in a gentle mood; in short, it was the lioness of the Botanical Garden. The First Consul had been already there; but as Madame Bonaparte had informed him of her proposal, he had promised to join us if his engagements would permit.

The lioness was doing well, but was, as Madame Bonaparte had told us, in a languishing mood. Felix Cassal, her keeper, entered the cage, took the cubs from her, and the poor beast, without moving, turned her eyes on him with an expression of softness and affection. She was extended in her cage on a good litter, and her little ones lay rolled in thick coarse carpets, as warmly as in the African sands.

Madame Bonaparte took one of the cubs in her hands, which drew forth a growl from the mother; but Felix spoke to her, and acknowledging his voice by a momentary glance of more fierceness than the former, she again turned to the offender, and renewed her growl. Madame Bonaparte was alarmed. "Oh! never fear," said Felix, "she is behind a strong grating, and besides, she has not yet recovered her strength, she would not hurt much."—"Oh!" said Madame Bonaparte, "I can dispense with the trial of her strength; there would be quite enough remaining to make me repent having caressed her son." This Cassal was an extraordinary man in his way. He was a great traveller, and had made interesting observations, even on the common habits of the country he had passed through; and though he pretended to have seen marvels altogether incredible, yet all he said was not false, and both amusement and instruction might be extracted from him. He had himself purchased the lioness of some Arabs, who had taken her in the environs of Constantinople. While she was large, a child having wounded her in the eye with a stone, she threw herself into so violent a passion as to produce abortion; and as she brought forth the present litter a hundred days afterwards, that must have been the utmost extent of her parturition, which disproves the conjectures of Pliny and M. Buffon; the latter, I believe, asserts, that the lioness is six or seven months with young.

She littered on the 18th Brumaire, and Felix named the first-born

whelp Marengo. "Was not I a good godfather?" said he to Madame Bonaparte.

He made me touch one of the whelps: but the lioness, who had turned away and appeared to think no more of the matter, suddenly started up to her full height, and uttered a roar that shook the very walls.

Felix soothed her, and took the cub himself. He told us that the First Consul, on his visit to the lioness, had caressed her, and was very well received. "He inquired the hour of her delivery," said Felix; "the nature of her food, and especially of her beverage; and the general who was with him gave me a bright piece of gold, that the lioness might drink to the health of the Republic, a direction I have obeyed. Oh, he thinks of every thing, the Citizen Consul!" While he spoke, I was meditating on the fortunes of this extraordinary man, which seemed to be mysteriously linked with all the wonders of his age.

The First Consul met us on horseback before we had quitted the gardens, and Felix no sooner perceived him, than he hurried forward to report the bulletin of the lioness; assuring him that she had drunk to his health, and that she was wonderfully well. Napoleon caressed her, and talked with Felix of all his beasts, with as much ease, and as perfect a knowledge of their properties and habits, as if this branch of science had been his particular study.

Felix, finding such encouragement, entered upon one of his best stories; but just as he arrived (on his own showing) at the most astonishing point, Napoleon patted him on the head with,

"Felix, you lie, my boy, there are no crocodiles in the place you speak of, nor ever were; but it is all one, proceed with your story."

This was more easily said than done. Felix was so thoroughly disconcerted by the First Consul's apostrophe, that it was impossible to recover the thread of his adventure.

"Well, it will do for another day," said Napoleon, good-humouredly; "only remember that crocodiles do not devour those who bathe in the Bosphorus, otherwise it would have been much easier to kill Leander by that means than by drowning, as he had no boat, poor fellow."

We promenaded for some time in these beautiful gardens, and their fine greenhouses. They are greatly improved since; yet the botanical gardens were even then the most complete institution of the kind in Europe. Other museums were richer in particular articles, but ours alone possessed that superiority in all, which has since rendered it the universal rendezvous for the study of natural history.

Napoleon observed that day, "It is my wish to render this the most attractive spot to all learned foreigners in Paris. I wish to draw them here to see and admire a people in their love of science and the arts. The museum of natural history shall be what those of sculpture and painting, and of ancient monuments, will be. Paris should be the first city of the world. If God grant me a life long enough, I would have her become the capital of the universe, in science as well as power. Our painters are already the first, the best in Europe. Excepting Canova and Appiani, Italy herself cannot boast talents equal to ours in painting and sculpture. Their poets also are inferior to ours. Cesarotti and Alfieri cannot dispute the palm with our young writers. In short," added he, "I am proud of my country, and I would have her always mindful of what she is and may be."

We visited the Cabinet of Natural History. The First Consul remarking on the length of a serpent from the Island of Java, was reminded of those of Egypt, and consequently was led to speak of the Psylli. He joked much about Denon, who was bent on knowing the flavour of these creatures, (not the Psylli, but the serpents,) and Junot declared, that the first he ate, on his initiation, seized his chin, and would not let it go, twisting itself five or six times round his chin, which in truth was immoderately long. Speaking of serpents, the First Consul related to us a droll incident that had occurred in his own house at Cairo. Junot was there and has since repeated it to me much more at length.

One morning at breakfast, the Psylli and serpents came under discussion. The General-in-chief said he believed only in the serpents. "I believe there are mountebanks in Egypt," added he, "as well as elsewhere. The Psylli exercise their juggling talents there, with even more facility than our men with a hazel wand display in France in searching in a kennel; and when a Psylle announces that he is going to eat a serpent, I verily believe he meets with more gapers than another would on the Pont Neuf."

"I assure you, General," said Junot, "that I have seen these men perform inconceivable feats. Do not think me more credulous than others; but I have seen the chief of those creatures do incomprehensible things."

"What! the chief of the serpents?" said the General-in-chief. "No, General, the chief of the Psylli. You may rally me, but on my honour it would astound you to see his performances."

"I tell you they are mountebanks, and nothing else. Hold! you shall have proof. Go instantly to the chief of the Psylli," said he to a domestic interpreter, "send him here, with two of his men."

The chief of the Psylli lost no time in answering the summons. As soon as he arrived, the General-in-chief told him, through the medium of the interpreter, "There are two serpents in this house, find them, and thou shalt have two sequins (12 francs) for thyself, and as much for thy followers."

The Psylle prostrated himself, and requested two troughs filled with water. When they were brought, he stripped himself naked as at his birth, then filled his mouth with water, laid himself flat on his face, and began creeping, in imitation of the reptile he was in search of, and spouting the water through his closed teeth to mimic its hissing. When he had in this manner made the tour of the ground-floor, sweeping the house with his person, he returned, and placing himself all naked and dirty as he was, before the General-in-chief, said to him with a savage laugh, "*Mafiche, Mafiche,*"* which signifies "there are none." The General-in-chief echoed his laugh, and said, "*Comment diable!* can this idiot really play the magician with some truth?" And he ordered the interpreter to give the Psylle to understand that the serpent had been seen. "Oh! I know that," said the Psylle. "I felt it on entering the house."

"There, now," said the General-in-chief, "now the comedy is beginning. Well; seek thy serpent, and if thou findest it, thou shalt have two additional sequins." The Psylle returned to his artifices, climbed with the same manœuvres a staircase which led to the upper story, where Bourrienne lodged, pursued by a troop of inquisitors, with the General-in-chief at their head, who determined not to lose sight of his magician. The corridor was lighted by a loophole overlooking the country, and through which the perfect and unvarying azure of the beautiful Egyptian sky was distinguishable. The Psylle closed his eyes and shuddered. "There is your actor beginning his part," said the First Consul to Junot. The serpent-detector, however, after several repetitions of his antics, said in a low voice, "There he is!"—"I shall be delighted to have the pleasure of paying him the honours of hospitality," said the General-in-chief; "but, my friend, I think thou art mocking us. Dost know that this animal, with his hissing music, has completely mystified us for the last hour, making us run about with parasols after his imaginary serpentship?" The Psylle, nowise discouraged, still crept and hissed about, till presently an actual serpent was seen to interpose its opaque line across the loophole, and was heard answering with fraternal good-will the hiss-

* Perhaps I write the word incorrectly; but I am not bound to understand the Arab orthography.

ing of the Psylle; it was six feet in length, and Junot has assured me that its eyes sparkled through the dusky corridor like a bright fire. It approached the Psylle, and was no sooner within his reach, than he caught it with incredible address, in one hand, just below the jaw-bone, in such a manner as to oblige the mouth to open, when, spitting into it, the effect was like magic; the reptile appeared struck with instant death, and, during his lethargy, the enchanter, by some peculiar operation, extracted the venom from his teeth, or rather, from his gums.

"Well, my General, what say you to this adventure?" asked Junot of the General-in-chief.

"What would you have me answer to an effect of chance? Your Psylle is a lucky impostor, that is all."

CHAPTER LIX.

Study of new men—My dinners—Advice of the First Consul, and changes in society—The days of the consuls—The household of Cambacérès—Messieurs d'Aigrefeuille and Monvel—A dinner at the house of Cambacérès—Gastronomers in the exercise of their functions—The solicitors at the house of the Second Consul—Mademoiselle de Montferrier and Monsieur Bastarréche—Beauty and the beast—*Bon mot* of Bonaparte—The court of the Second Consul, and promenade at the Palâis Royal—Futurity and the truffled turkey—M. de Souza and his wig—General Mortier and his family—The two brothers of Berthier—Services of Mortier—His retirement.

CONTEMPORARY memoirs are neither more nor less than well filled galleries, adorned on one side with choice portraits, and lighted on the other by windows overlooking the past; he therefore who constructs and furnishes these galleries, should be especially attentive to the resemblance of his personages, to the accumulation of his portraits, and to opening the fullest possible view upon the events he has witnessed. By this means we enter completely into his life, which will sometimes, perhaps frequently, be destitute of pleasure, and above all, of happiness; but it can never be divested of interest.

During the three months succeeding my marriage no day passed that Junot did not introduce to me several of his friends, and a multitude of acquaintances. I was accustomed to see much company at my mother's. Her society was numerous, but it sank into insignificance compared with ours. This perpetual distraction was at first

extremely fatiguing; and my mother, who came to instal me in my new dignity of mistress of my house, giving me credit for the manner in which I acquitted myself of my arduous functions, added, that for her part, as a spectator only, one of these *soirées* more than satisfied her, and had its arrangement fallen on her, it would have cost her a week's illness.

For some time I was of her opinion, but before a month had elapsed I was sensible of a growing inclination for company; and in a short time, aided by a disposition to view all things on the brightest side, and a lively interest in seeking out, and associating with a visible form all circumstances relating to the life and character of men whose names had long struck my ears in society, and my eyes in the journals, I began to feel real pleasure in my new situation. Junot, to whom I imparted my change of sentiment, sincerely congratulated me upon it, and promised to assist me whenever my researches should require his aid.

There were at that time few open houses at Paris; the privilege being confined to the ministers and authorities, and even they received only large and formal parties. I was anxious to effect a reformation in this respect, and once expressed my wish to the First Consul, when he was mentioning his own desire to see a more free communication between the society of Paris and the members of the government.

"Accomplish that, and you will be a charming little woman," said General Bonaparte. "If you make the attempt, you will succeed, for you know what it is to hold a drawing-room. Let citizen Cambacérès see that, for this purpose, it is not sufficient merely to give a dinner."

The Consul Cambacérès received company every Tuesday and Saturday, and for the first six months of the year IX. no other house could stand a comparison with the Hôtel Cambacérès;* it was soon, however, not only imitated, but excelled. The principal members of his household were, Messieurs de Lavollée and Monvel, secretaries; and Messieurs de Chateauneuf and d'Aigrefeuille, who had no appointed functions, but voluntarily acted as chamberlains; and the moment a lady was announced, one of these gentlemen ran to the door to receive and conduct her to a chair.

I had a great friendship for Cambacérès, which neither absence nor distance ever impaired; yet I must acknowledge, that notwith-

* This splendid house is situated in the Rue de Provence, at the corner of the Rue Taitbout, and has a very fine garden.

standing the host's peculiar elegance and superior powers of pleasing, and notwithstanding even that friendly welcome and perfect politeness, which, under the influence of the master's example, extended itself to the very lowest domestic of the household, no sooner had you passed the gate of the Hôtel de Cambacérès than the very air seemed impregnated with ennui, sleep took possession of the eyelids, and a sort of lethargy suspended every faculty as completely as in the temple of Morpheus.

The dinner party never exceeded five-and-twenty, and of these the proportion of ladies was small: there were never indeed more than two of such consideration from the offices of their husbands, as that their pretensions to precedence might have occasioned jealousies. He had an excellent cook; and the carving fell to the department of the maître d'hôtel, Cambacérès himself never doing the honours, except of a dish of rare game. This was a great innovation in the etiquette of French society, but I found it agreeable; I cannot, however, say as much for his custom of entertaining the guests nearest to him with an enumeration of all his maladies of the day; assuring us he was too ill to eat, yet always concluding with making an excellent meal. He had always great conversational powers, and the incidents of his narratives acquired novelty and grace from the turn of his language. His evening drawing-room was crowded with judges, registrars, and other officers of all the courts in France, who seemed already to anticipate the future Arch-Chancellor; he bore, indeed, even at that period the character of the ablest civilian in the country.

The Third Consul, too, had already entered upon his future department, the financial and administrative; and he also had his two evenings appropriated weekly. How many original figures have passed before my eyes in these two houses! How often, when my eager scrutiny has been awakened by the announcement of a name which had figured conspicuously in the revolution, have I been disappointed by an insignificant or repulsive exterior! how often, seated beside such a one, the whole dinner-time, which with Cambacérès was never short, I have been stupified by the utter nullity of his ideas! But on communicating my feelings to Cambacérès he would answer, "This man's reputation was the effect of hazard; opportunity fell in his way, and instinctively he seized it by the forelock."

The conduct of Cambacérès during the revolution has been much talked of, and I do not pretend to excuse it. I hate the sanguinary years with which his name is connected, and every thing that recalls them; but difficult as the task may be, I would fain see him exempted from the censures which attach to the men of that period. Napoleon

did not approve of the events of 1793, but he excused the famous vote of Cambacérès by the reflection that the thing once done, that is to say, the King once condemned, the interests of France, and especially of Paris, demanded the immediate consummation of that terrible drama.

He disapproved the sentence, which he characterized as a resolution unjustly adopted towards a man who was guilty only of the crimes of others; and I never heard him pronounce the name of Louis XVI. without the additional epithet of "*the unfortunate king.*"

I transmit his opinion here, because I conceive that on a matter so momentous, and which so nearly concerns his own destiny, since it still, at thirty-eight years' distance, influences that of France, it must be of indescribable interest to us.

But while I highly respect the general opinions of Napoleon because the vastness of his genius imposes admiration and docility on subjects above the level of my feeble comprehension, there are circumstances in which I must hold my own judgment free to follow the guidance of my heart; and I cannot surrender it to his when he alleges the necessity of accelerating an event so deplorable.

All political considerations are in this case set apart; I will admit none. Young enthusiasts, such as Valazé, Vergniaud, Fonfrède, might be misled by a pure fanaticism, a love of holy liberty, into sanctioning with their voice the condemnation of Louis XVI.; they dreamt of an Utopia, and thought to obtain it by a sacrifice, a holocaust, over which they groaned even while offering it; but that others, awake to the realities of life, should abuse their sacred right of exercising the power implanted in man, to the irretrievable ruin of a fellow-creature, this is what afflicts me; for I cannot overlook this consideration in my estimate of a man whom I regard, and in whom, without partiality, I have recognised great and noble qualities. Why did he tarnish them by a single hour of his life? That hour is said to have cost him bitter remorse; yes, I believe it. I can well believe that in the silent solitude of the night he must have shuddered when three strokes sounded near his bed! they must have recalled that ill-omened night, when, rushing to the tribune he carried the blow home to the head of the victim by demanding the execution of the fatal decree within twenty-four hours. The greatest of criminals is allowed time for preparation, some days, at least some hours respite; but Louis the Sixteenth's demand was superseded; he could not obtain sixty hours delay. I am not sufficiently versed in political arguments to understand the absolute necessity of such rigour; I seek not even to bring it to the level of my capacity. I am content to feel that it grieves me; and grieves me the more that it is associated with the remembrance of a man I

sincerely loved, and whose prominent part in the scene has not escaped the observation of malevolence.

Cambacérès was originally counsellor in the court of finances of Languedoc. When the Count de Perigord* presided over the states of that province, of which he was commandant in 1786, Cambacérès was in misfortune. M. de Perigord, always benevolent and ready to assist the needy, asked and obtained for the almost indigent counsellor a pension of two hundred francs, and for his father one of two thousand francs, out of the royal lotteries.

The courtesy of Cambacérès was general, but his countrymen from Languedoc he welcomed with a peculiar urbanity, the more invaluable that it had none of that varnish of fashionable politeness, too often a deceitful beacon, beguiling its victims to shipwreck, while they fancy themselves sailing on a friendly sea. Many Languedocians went direct to the Hôtel de Cambacérès on alighting from the diligences; he received them with kindness, examined their petitions, and if he could not assist them, unhesitatingly told them the truth, pointing out at the same time how they might obtain other advantages, and never failed to forward their interests. I may be allowed to call Cambacérès an honest man; for, looking around on all his equals in power, I have never found one of such absolute good faith and probity, to which many others can testify.

His figure was extraordinarily ugly, as well as unique. The slow and regular step, the measured cadence of accentuation, the very look, which was three times as long as another's to arrive at its object,—all was in admirable keeping with the long person, long nose, long chin, and the yellow skin, which betrayed not the smallest symptoms that any matter inclining to sanguine, circulated beneath its cellular texture. The same consistency, though probably unstudied, pervaded his dress; and when demurely promenading the galleries of the Palais Royal, then the Palais Egalité, the singular cut and colour of his embroidered coat; his ruffles, at that time so uncommon; his short breeches, silk stockings, shoes polished with English blacking, and fastened with gold buckles; his old-fashioned wig and cue, and his well-appointed and well-placed three-cornered hat, produced altogether a most fantastic effect.

The members of his household, by their peculiarities of dress, served as accessories to the picture.

He went every evening to the theatre, and seldom failed to make

* The Count de Perigord, Prince of Chalais, uncle of M. de Talleyrand, and brother of the Archbishop of Paris, of whom I have spoken in the first part of these Memoirs. He was an intimate friend of my mother.

his appearance afterwards with his suite, all in full costume, either in the gardens of the Tuileries or of the Palais Egalité; where every thing around exhibited the most ludicrous disparity with this strange group, whose solemn deportment and deliberate and circumspect discourse might serve to personify the disciples of Plato following their master to Sunium. The First Consul was sometimes annoyed, that the ridicule attached to his colleague appeared to revert upon him, and I remember once seeing him enraged as he listened to the translation of a passage from the English journals. The Second Consul was caricatured, and from the Second to the First the transition is so easy that the journalist made no scruple of it. The First Consul stamped his foot, and said to Josephine,

"You must interfere in this matter—do you hear? It is only a woman that can tell a man he is ridiculous; if I meddle I shall tell him he is mad."

I know not whether Madame Bonaparte achieved her commission to the Consul Cambacérès; but this I know, that although always highly distinguished for his knowledge, his politeness, and his dinners, he yet always remained that which had so highly discomposed the First Consul.

Cambacérès had a charming niece, the daughter of his nephew, M. Duvidal de Mont-Ferrier. I have always wondered that he did not place her at the head of his establishment; but perhaps he was terrified by the aspect of her acolyte, whom it would have been difficult to exclude, for he was the husband, and the most jealous upon earth. Among the events of life difficult to comprehend, there are always some much more intricate than others: I allude to the marriage of Mademoiselle Rose de Mont-Ferrier with M. Bastarrêche, a banker of Bayonne, afterwards established at Paris in partnership with M. Jubié, the possessor of an immense fortune, but the most frightful of monsters.

It would be impossible faithfully to portray Mademoiselle Rose de Mont-Ferrier at the age of eighteen, but with eyes and profile of corresponding beauty, her principal charms consisted of a nymph-like figure, and a complexion of which no comparison can give an idea. It was superior even to Madame Murat's; it breathed an animation, a warmth of colouring which, without metaphor, reminded one of the flower whose name she bore, and with the delicacy of its tints was combined the velvet of the peach.

Considering the high station of Cambacérès, it was naturally expected that Mademoiselle de Mont-Ferrier would make a brilliant match. But long afterwards, even after the death of M. de Bastar-

rêche, Napoleon could not forgive Cambacérès for consenting to it.—"It is Beauty and the Beast realized," said he.* All Paris heard with surprise that the young lady showed no repugnance; and with this news circulated magnificent details of the splendid equipages and wedding-dresses, nothing was talked of but diamonds, pearls, and jewels innumerable given by *Azor*. "*Ah!*" said the First Consul, "*the present makes us forget the future.*"

Before leaving the subject of the Consul Cambacérès, I must relate a little adventure which happened about this time. A Portuguese, named Don Alexander de Souza, had just arrived in Paris, on his road to or from an embassy at Rome, I cannot very precisely recollect which.

This M. de Souza was a very little man, about four feet ten or eleven inches high, and the whole of his delicate person cast in a most diminutive mould: he was not only thin, but absolutely shrivelled; yet he had perfectly the air of a gentleman, and his manners were those of a person of quality. The authorities received him with something more than the cordiality due to the friend of our enemies, and M. de Souza had nothing to complain of on his passage through Paris. The Second Consul would not let slip such an opportunity to give a sumptuous dinner. All the authorities were invited, and many of his friends; Junot and I were of the number, as were Duroc, Lannes, and Mortier, now Duke of Treviso, and then commandant of the first military division.

I have not before mentioned this excellent man, or his wife, all goodness, simplicity, and gentleness. He was Junot's superior as commandant of the division, while Junot was only commandant of Paris; but we lived on the best and most friendly terms; for General Mortier was, and still is, the best and most worthy of men: but at this period he would laugh like a child, and his mirth sometimes compromised the dignity of the General-commandant's epaulettes.† M. de Souza, on occasion of this dinner, wore a magnificent coat of Segovian cloth, embroidered in gold, with a perfection we cannot attain in France. A frill of fine cambric rose almost imperceptibly at the top of his well-buttoned coat, in the English fashion, and his head displayed a peruke *à la Pitt*, more fully to exemplify that

* *La Belle et la Bête, ou Azor et Zémire*," an opera much in vogue at Paris.

† General, afterwards Marshal, Mortier was killed on the 28th of July, 1835, while riding by the side of Louis Philippe on the Boulevard du Temple opposite the Jardin Turc, by the explosion of the infernal machine invented and fired by Fieschi, with an intent to kill the king and his two sons.

Portugal was not only the very humble servant of England, but equally the submissive slave of her minister.

M. de Souza was seated at table between me and Madame Jolivet, wife of a counsellor of state. All the civilities lavished on the foreign traveller failed to banish the ennui with which this republican land seemed to inspire him. I was obliged to stifle my yawns in answering some trifling questions, and had little hope of a gayer termination of the repast, when an incident, certainly not included in the instructions of Cambacérès to his *maîtres d'hôtel*, gave a new turn to the aspect of affairs. Cambacérès had for some time placed his household on a very respectable footing: his domestics had all the superb livery of the Consuls, and the *maîtres d'hôtel* had exchanged their black dresses for maroon cloth, with wrought gold buttons. There were always two courses at the Second Consul's, and as each course consisted of eighteen or twenty removes, it may be supposed the arm of the *maître d'hôtel* intruded pretty frequently between each of the guests; but poor little Souza's statue presented no obstacle; the dishes passed over his head; and on one of these occasions, one of the purveyor's gold buttons being loose, hitched in the little gentleman's wig, and carried it off.

The catastrophe was sudden, and no one knew how it had happened; even the *maître d'hôtel* himself had moved some distance before he discovered his involuntary theft; meanwhile the bewildered eyes of M. de Souza were seeking his wig in the direction of the ceiling, as if he imagined it had really taken wing, and those of the thirty persons around him fixed on his startled figure, caused him an embarrassment which completed the burlesque of his appearance. Yet we should all have behaved decently, had he taken the accident in good part; but, wishing to be dignified under his misfortune, he thought perhaps to impose vastly, by saying, with the utmost seriousness, to the *maître d'hôtel*, who came in all haste to apologize,

"Sir, will you restore me my wig?" And he set to work to replace it; but the discomposure which was evident through all his studied bravery, prevented his accurately distinguishing the position of the tuft *à la Pitt*, and the wig, to my inexpressible satisfaction, was put on all askew, so that the tuft just surmounted the right ear, till Madame Jolivet, in a tone of more than usual acerbity, (for she was offended at the incivility of her neighbour, who had not addressed a word to her since he had conducted her to her seat,) said to him, "Sir, your wig is awry;" and as she spoke, she obligingly raised her hand to the head of the little gentleman, who bounded away from her friendly assistance with a vivacity that had nearly dashed me to the ground.

I had avoided looking at either my husband or General Mortier, certain that my suppressed laughter must have burst forth; it became, however, at length uncontrollable, and appeared equally to master the whole company; for no sooner had mine exploded, than a mad and inextinguishable peal resounded from every part of the table; but General Mortier's was loudest, and so violent as to oblige him eventually to rise from table. The polite host, on whose imperfect vision all this buffoonery was lost, no sooner understood the matter than he exhausted himself in apologies to M. de Souza, who, while puffing with rage, replied, bowing, that it was of no consequence; and the unfortunate wig, in spite of Madame Jolivet's officious care, remained awry. General Mortier, I am sure, will to this day remember that dinner, and the hearty laugh it afforded him.

Having mentioned General Mortier, I must complete the portrait of a friend. General Edward Mortier, at the time I knew him, in 1800, was about the same age as all the general officers of the army; and this similarity of years is not surprising; all the youth of France, inflamed with the love of their country, and the desire of defending her, simultaneously deserted their firesides to enter the service. I can safely affirm, that at that moment fifty thousand arms, under the direction of fifty thousand heads, a little exalted, no doubt, but animated by true patriotism, would have offered themselves to oppressed and struggling Poland; but their offer would have been made at the gates of Warsaw. There they would have been, perhaps, in evasion of authority, but at least in a just and holy cause, and above all, in a cause which was become our own.

These young men left their cherished families and brilliant fortunes that offered them all the enjoyments of luxury, for hard couches and munition bread, which they were seen carrying on the bayonet, gaily singing the *Marseillaise*. But of all this bright and valorous troop, not a single young man was seen running about Paris exciting the people to revolt, crying in the clubs, breaking the lamps, committing, in short, the acts of men at once divested of reason and disaffected to public order. I witnessed the whole course of the revolution, and never, I can aver, have I seen one of the characters in whom she proudly glories, pursue the conduct which I now see panegyrised as a model, and practised by individuals who, with names unknown even in their own precinct, fancy themselves leaders of a party, because they sport moustaches, and buttoned coat, and a dagger. All this is pitiable! But Poland has fallen under the far differently operating sword of Russia, while the ready succour of fifty thousand brave Frenchmen would have saved her. "But," it will be said, "we could

not pass." What then? we should have forced the passage. When authority becomes unjust, open revolt is far more justifiable than those perpetual commotions which inflict a slow fever on an empire, deprive the labourer of his bread by depriving him of his work, and thus aim a double blow against the throne of our true tree of liberty. How full of misfortune is that state of delirium, of perpetual agitation, incapable of uniformity, still more incapable of consistency in its wishes, and following no prescribed course for the attainment of its object. The political career is soon terminated when intrigue is mistaken for glory, and clamour for renown.

I have wandered far from the subject of my former friend, but at this moment I am reading the detail of the recent disasters of Poland, and tears of indignation mingle with those of grief. Nevertheless, this grief and this indignation are not directed against rational beings; they accuse only those who, eight months ago, might have acted, but who, either from incapacity, egotism, or ambitious interests excited nearer home, have confined themselves to impotent cries, and to speeches as full of verbosity as of nonentity.

When America called Europe to her assistance, our fathers did not answer her demand with empty promises. They went, sword in hand, to her aid. Instead of wearing crape on their hats, raising subscriptions, giving balls, and feasting at public dinners, while the unfortunate objects of all this display were perishing with famine, our fathers and our brothers carried them their blood ready to shed, arms and ammunition, and the richest carried them their fortunes.* There is not an instance of the hottest head of that period (and there were many such) having broken a single lamp, or burnt a single bundle of straw, when the departure of these brave knights was for a moment obstructed. No! they silently escaped, gained a French port, and embarked, leaving no bleeding ruins behind them, and seeing before them ever-verdant laurels, nobly acquired, and flourishing beyond the limits of time or the chances of fate.

Without speaking particularly of M. de la Fayette, for he was not alone, what gratitude have these American campaigners left in the hearts of the people they saved! their wishes at least have followed our cause: but if, in 1775, all our youth had satisfied themselves with uttering only cries under the windows of the king, or before the hotels of the ministers, the Americans, deceived by vain hopes, and aban-

* My father and brother joined the American war; my brother was then very young; but his heart was not the less penetrated with the noble cause in which he was associated.

doned to their own resources, would at this day have been either exterminated, or inhabiting as slaves the wildest retreats of Ireland, there to weep over their unhappy country. Who would they then have accused? M. de Maurepas? M. de Montbarrey? Oh, no! They would have said, "In addressing ourselves to the French nation and invoking her generous valour to our aid, did we imagine that the incapacity of one minister, and the venality of another, could have restrained the chivalry of a whole nation? The groaning voice of an oppressed people is louder than such vain considerations. It is a woman attacked in a wood, and demanding succour from every passer by." Such would have been the reflections of the Americans, and such, I feel assured, will be those of the unfortunate survivors amongst the recent victims. But as it is not my province to write the history of our present miseries, I resume my pen to trace that of happier days.

As I have already said, General Edward Mortier was in command of the first division; he lodged in a large hotel, in the street of the Capuchins, with his wife, his sister-in-law, and an interesting young family. In the same house were Madame César Berthier (whose husband was under the command of General Mortier), General Menard, and another. General Mortier had married a young and charming wife, who inspired me at first sight with friendship and good will. Without being extremely pretty, or in any other way personally remarkable, she pleased by an expression of mildness, and a general gracefulness which prepossessed at the first glance. A good mother and fond of her home, from which it was difficult to entice her, her thoughts were chiefly devoted to the domestic happiness of her husband and family. She had an agreeable sister, perhaps even prettier than Madame Mortier, but much less pleasing, as she had more formality and self-love.

In this house we seemed, from the moment of entering, to breathe peace and happiness. I felt myself cheerful as soon as I set my foot upon the staircase; but these sensations would all have vanished had I but mistaken the door and entered the ground-floor, where a clamour prevailed that might have typified the infernal regions. General César Berthier, brother of the Minister of War, might be a very good soldier: I am no judge of such matters. All I can say is, that he had a very genteel and agreeable wife, whom he made miserable with so little reserve, that I speak of it no more openly than he himself did in my presence, whom he scarcely knew. Madame César Berthier was sister of Madame Leopold Berthier; but the manners of the two brothers widely differed. Leopold, with more amenity of language

and more disposition to please than César, does not appear to have had much power over the heart of his wife; for she divorced him to marry General Lasalle, the most amusing and bravest of profligate hussars. Leopold had wit, a qualification very scarce with César; and his stammer and bluntness of language spoiled the little he had. Both ladies were natives of Versailles; their maiden name was d'Aiguillon, but they were no way related to the ducal house of that name. Madame César, when young, must have been very engaging; for she was well-shaped, had a little turn-up nose, fair hair, and arms of remarkable beauty. At the time I knew her, she was beginning to be marked with an eruption; but she was still young, and on the whole a pretty and elegant woman, fond of the toilet, and successful in its disposition. Her daughter, Madame Bruyère, is a charming woman.

The military reputation of General Mortier has no need of my pen to illustrate it in all its purity; but I would fain instance his conduct in Hanover, which glorious era, and many other brilliant moments of his life are attested by the eloquent lines of M. Bignon.

My esteem for General Mortier was first inspired by my husband, who had much regard for him, and held both his civil character and military talents in high respect.

Probity and honour were amongst his conspicuous virtues. Junot, who was restive under authority, and knew how to obey only one man, was sometimes at issue with his superior, which always grieved him. I have often seen him, after writing a letter, repent and immediately disavow it; and constantly, on such occasions, have I been witness of General Mortier's benevolence of character. Though young, he had the advantage of Junot in years, and slight as was the difference, it justified him in offering some fraternal and jesting remonstrances to his junior, and sparing him many an unpleasant collision with the First Consul, provoked by his hot-headedness, which would certainly have been magnified by such men as Bourrienne, Fouché, and some others, who, by their situation about the First Consul, had direct access to his ear to prejudice those who enjoyed his favour. General Mortier's post gave him ample means of mischief, but he never injured a single individual.

Junot, when at Arras, in 1803, had commenced writing some notices, which comprised biographies of several of his friends; and the amiable frankness of his character, his intelligent mind, and especially his depth of observation, would have rendered this little work truly remarkable. I have adopted, and endeavoured to continue it in my journal.

His judgment of Mortier is wholly impartial, nor can its truth be

doubted; for military men, like us women, have their mutual little jealousies, their quarrels, their petty passions, which, however, are all under the dominion of the greatest of all—glory.

Mortier was distinguished from the moment of his entrance into the service. He first joined the army of the north, then that of the Rhine; and afterwards, in our day of misfortune, he valiantly seconded Massena in the defeat of the Austro-Russian army. In the Moretta-Thal, near Schwitz, he had a remarkable engagement, in which he repulsed General Rosenberg, just arrived from Italy with Russian troops to fall upon us; an action which had a direct influence on our fate, and France ought to bear sincere gratitude towards all who belonged to this army of the Danube.

His conquest of the Electorate of Hanover, with an army inferior in number by more than two-thirds to that of the enemy; in short, the convention of Sühlingen, constitutes an honourable monument, which Marshal Mortier raised at once to the glory of his country and to his own. Again, he was in a most perilous situation at Dierstein,* on the banks of the Danube, with only five thousand men of the Gazan division. Encountered by the Russian vanguard under the command of Prince Bagration, twenty-five thousand strong, he not only resisted, but forced his passage, and rejoined the main army on the opposite side of the river. At the head of the eighth corps in the next campaign, 1806, he attacked the Elector of Hesse Cassel, and in one day the whole of Westphalia fell into our hands, with the treasure, provisions, and military stores of the enemy. Mortier might have been enriched by more than glory in this action; but no, he left to his country the charge of providing him a recompense. Some weeks afterwards he took possession, in the name of France, of the Electorate of Hanover, which his sword had conquered two years previously. Here, though as Marshal commanding in chief, and as it were thrice-puissant Pro-Consul, he might have exercised his power as he would—ask the inhabitants! They will tell you, even to this day, that Mortier's conduct was that of an honest soldier. Next came the day of Friedland, to which he valiantly contributed. Then he went to take a command in the Peninsula. The victory of Ocana, in destroying the strongest of the insurgent armies composed of fifty thousand men, while the French were but twenty-five thousand, was of immense importance to the interest of France, for it decided the invasion of Andalusia. Having penetrated the Sierra Morena, he did not entangle himself in its defiles; but, leaving that task to Marshal Victor, he tra-

* In 1805.

versed Spanish Estremadura, laid siege to Badajos, carried it at the end of fifty-four days, and made seven thousand prisoners. Returning from thence to Russia at the head of the young guard, he gave new proofs of devotion to his country and its chief. Then came the campaign of 1813. Still in command of the young guard, Mortier's conduct was like the past, faithful and brave. Lutzen, Kœnigswartha, Bautzen, Hochkirch, Wurtschen, and Reichenbach, saw his efforts sometimes unsuccessful, but never useless.

In the battle of Dresden, again he deserved praise. He defended, step by step, the soil of his country. Overcome by the Prince of Sweden and General Bulow, he fought not the less bravely at Craonne, La Fère, Provins, Nangis, Meaux, Lagny, Saint-Mandé, and at length at Paris.

In retiring to his estate at Plessis Lalande, Marshal Mortier has had leisure to meditate on the progressive misfortunes of his country, that country which he had served so gloriously. I have experienced a moment's happiness in retracing so illustrious a life. It has not many parallels.

CHAPTER LX.

The Quintidi and the Parade at the Tuileries—The young man and the petition—The First Consul and the blood of the young man—The Governor of the Bastille and the pension—M. Delatude, and forty years in a dungeon—M. de Sartines and recriminations—Vincennes, the Bastille, and Bicêtre—Santerre—The dynamometer—The maid and the burnt village—Rossignol and Rousin—The revolutionary army and the infernal legions—General Charbonnier and the aide-de-camp—Art thou a good patriot?—*Pumping Oils*—General Vandamme and his sabre exercise—The village *Ultérieur*—The Scheldt a fine road.

One Quintidi, at the moment that the First Consul was descending to hold the review in the Court of the Tuileries, an event happened sufficiently singular to attract attention and interest. In the dense crowd that surrounded the line, was a young man of about fifteen, dressed in a worn but neat black coat, which indicated that its master was above the hireling class. His figure was interesting; he was pale, and his neighbours observed that he trembled violently, often put his hand to his bosom, and appeared very impatient to see the First Consul.

When the drums beat the young man's emotion became so powerful, that his breast was seen to swell with the palpitation of his heart. The First Consul descended the stairs, and as he reached the middle of the vestibule, the young man threw himself before him, and presented a paper. The last few months had so teemed with plots and attempts against the life of the First Consul, that twenty arms, all strangers to his suite, were instantly stretched forth to seize the boy, who, raising his hand and fixing an imploring look on the First Consul, still held forward his petition.

"Leave the young man—I am going to speak to him," said the First Consul; and advancing towards him, "What do you want, my boy?" demanded he.

The young man could not reply, but falling on his knees, presented his petition. The First Consul read it with an expression of countenance which struck all who surrounded him. His eyes then rested with a look of deep commiseration on the still kneeling young man, to whom he said,

"Rise, my child; we kneel to God alone. Is your mother still in Paris?"

An almost stifled "Yes," escaped the lips of the young petitioner.

"Acquaint her that a pension of twelve hundred francs is awarded her; and will commence six months prior to the present date."

At the sound of these words, the poor youth fell again on his knees, raising towards the First Consul his tearful eyes and trembling hands, which endeavoured to seize his; but his emotion was too violent. His extreme paleness increased on hearing the favour granted to his mother; but it speedily gave place to purple. The veins of his forehead swelled till they were ready to burst, his eyes closed, he fell insensible at the feet of the First Consul, and nature, bringing her own relief, a profuse hemorrhage ensued, and the First Consul was covered with the poor boy's blood.

"A surgeon!" cried he, instantly, "a surgeon!" But joy, it is said, is never fatal; the young man recovered his senses, and bursting into tears, seized almost forcibly the hand of the First Consul, and kissed it with transport.

"You are a deity to my family!" exclaimed the youth; "I will pray for you every day of my life."

The First Consul smiled as he pressed the young hand, and pursued his way to the review; but before he mounted his horse, he recommended the boy to Junot, and to the Minister of War, and then gave him a friendly salute, saying,

"If you wish to enter the service apply to the General command-

ing the city of Paris; he will mention it to the Minister of War, and we will seek to do something for you."

The young man answered only with a low bow, and followed the First Consul to the steps of the portico. He saw the beautiful *Désiré* brought; the General leaping lightly to his saddle, galloped off, and was soon amidst the thronged ranks of his soldiers, followed by a numerous and brilliant suite, who surrounded him as the satellites of a planet constantly revolve around their centre; he saw those grenadiers, still black with the powder of Marengo, with their high leather caps overshadowing their faces; that fine regiment of *chasseurs*, then commanded by Eugène Beauharnais, those gilded uniforms, those horses, that military music, and last of all, the magician, who fascinated with his look of fire all who approached the sphere of his influence.....The young man cried,

"Yes, I will serve! I will be a soldier, that a ray of that glory may fall on me."

This young man, so unfortunate and so grateful, was the son of Monsieur Delaunay, Governor of the Bastille, massacred the 14th of July, 1789.

Junot said to me one day, "I must bring you into conversation with a man of whom you have certainly heard, and whose Memoirs you have, of course, read; M. Delatude,—do you know him?"

"Ah!" I exclaimed, "M. Delatude, and you ask whether I know him? I do not know him personally, but I am well acquainted with his misfortunes, which have so deeply interested me that I should be delighted to see himself." Two days afterwards, Junot told me, "This morning, M. Delatude will breakfast with us; he will bring Madame Lemoine, for he no more moves without her than without his ladder."

It is well known that M. Delatude, when young, wanting to obtain a favour of Madame de Pompadour, thought to excite her gratitude by writing her a letter with his own signature, announcing that accident had just discovered to him a plot for poisoning the marchioness, by means of a box of confectionery, to be conveyed to her that very day. After which, mixing a harmless emetic with the sweatmeats, he despatched them anonymously. M. de Sartine, the Lieutenant-general of Police, was summoned in haste, and fell into great disgrace for having suffered so heinous a plot to be detected by a stranger. Returning enraged to his office, he accused his first commissary; he the second; and so on, till all their recriminations ended in a full disclosure of M. Delatude's clever invention. M. de Sartine's vengeance was proportioned, not to the offence, but to the apprehensions he had endured

from the favourite's displeasure; and the unfortunate intriguer was thrown into a dungeon at Vincennes, without any judiciary form. At the end of three years he escaped by means of a ladder manufactured from his own linen, was retaken and confined ten years in the Bastille, when he escaped a second time; was again overtaken by the terrible vengeance of the director of the police, and finding a new dungeon at Bicêtre, was there recommended to the extreme rigour of the governor: in short, his captivity for an innocent though unworthy pleasantry, lasted thirty-seven years. On his first release, Brunetière had been acquainted with him, and had told me this story, but had afterwards lost sight of him, to my great regret, for I desired nothing more ardently than to see M. Delatude.

I received him with a respect and tenderness truly sincere; but my enchantment was not proof against an old dotard repeating his oft-told tale with a soporific prolixity, which occasioned me in despair to address Madame Lemoine. She was a retired mercer, who one day picking up a packet in the street St. Denis, found it to be a tablet made of the crumb of bread, on which, with a large fish-bone for his pen, the poor sufferer had written in his own blood the history of his imprisonment. Madame de Pompadour and M. de Sartines being both dead, Madame Lemoine, who lost no time in applying to the Superintendent of Police, had little difficulty in procuring his liberation, in consideration of his long detention; she devoted herself wholly to her grateful protégé, who designated her always as his delivering angel; and uniting their scanty means (for Delatude enjoyed from funds at Junot's disposal a pension of two hundred francs), they lived together nearly on the terms of father and daughter.

His ladder was a real masterpiece of human patience; it contained a hundred pieces of wood, all cut with a pen-knife, from the faggots which served him for fuel; and the cord, composed of single threads drawn from his linen, and twisted by himself was of the thickness of my thumb. On his first flight from Vincennes, his ladder was not long enough by fifteen feet: he was therefore obliged to leap, and dislocated his wrist.

Madame Lemoine told us that the First Consul had desired to see M. Delatude, and I pictured to myself how completely he, who could not tolerate much talking from his most intimate friends, would be wearied by the puerile and tedious loquacity of this *affecting victim of despotism*, who had passed forty-one years of his life in various prisons. The visit of M. Delatude left a distressing impression on my mind, for it destroyed a pleasing illusion.

In the course of the same week I experienced a surprise of a dif-

ferent kind, also caused by a person I had never seen, and whose name sounded in my ears like a cry of carnage.

One morning, while we were at breakfast, a tall stout man presented himself, of an unobjectionable appearance and countenance. Junot saluted him; but I perceived that his salute was constrained. Our breakfast was over, and we were passing into the drawing-room. The stranger walked forward with a firm and resolute step; "This is an odd person," thought I to myself. Junot offered him coffee, which he refused with "No, thank you, General, I never take my cup in the morning; as for a small glass, if Mademoiselle will permit—"

"It is my wife," said Junot in a very serious tone.

"Ah! *c'est la citoyenne Junot!*" and the personage began to stare at me with an attention which excited rather merriment than anger; for it was evident that this man, though rude by nature, had no intention of being so. "Ah! it is the *citoyenne Junot! Diable*, colleague, you have not made your soundings ill."

I whispered to Junot, to tell me the name of this *General;* for it seemed that he had at least pretensions to that title. "No," replied Junot, "you must guess it; it is a name prodigiously well known."

Meanwhile the tall man was conversing with Junot's first aide-de-camp, M. Laborde; but I could gather nothing from the absurdities, solecisms, and ill-arranged sentences, which were passing between them.

An instrument lay on the table, invented and constructed by Reigner, the mechanical armourer, for measuring the human strength; by pressing with the two hands two bands of leather which confine a semicircular plate of brass, engraved with a scale, and furnished with a needle, which is made to move in proportion to the force of the pressure, and indicates, by the number to which it points, the strength of the individual. Junot took it up, and, pressing it, made the needle run so rapidly and forcibly, that it nearly struck the opposite extremity of the dynamometer, indicating a very unusual strength of wrist. The strange General then took up the instrument, but instead of using, examined it, and then said, laughing,

"Stay! that resembles those utensils I took with me when I went down yonder to the west with Ronsin and Rossignol. I had a learned aide-de-camp, a mathematician. Is not that what you call this sort of instruments?

"Well, when the Convention appointed me to command the republican army, I refused, because I know myself, and know that I am not strong in the article of manœuvres; I refused, but what of that? What the Convention chose, it chose. I was obliged to take

the command of one of the invincible columns. Ronsin commanded another; and poor Rossignol he had a third. Well, I told you just now I had a learned aide-de-camp. He declared to the Convention, that for this campaign, all the instruments of which he gave me a list would be required; and they gave me them all. Two little wagons were filled with them.

"Away I carried them; my aide-de-camp, Platière,* made use of them, and then I sold them;" and he ended with a loud laugh; but my laughter stopped short. This speech had made him known. It was Santerre! Santerre, the brewer of the Faubourg St. Antoine, who was, on the 11th of August, 1792, appointed Commandant of the Parisienne National Guard, who had the immediate custody of the Royal Family in the Temple, and who commanded the troops on the 21st of January, 1793: he was first sent to La Vendée to command a corps with those two wretches whom he had named in my hearing. I had heard from inhabitants of Saumur, Montagne, and other neighbouring towns, frightful details of all that Santerre had done in La Vendée. Though his name is known as associated with the great political tragedy, yet it figures in few lines of history, and on one or two pages so stained with blood as to destroy the possibility of distinguishing those actions in which he figures. I knew much of him, but was, I confess, far from imagining that this man would himself assume the narrator, to afford me new light on the horrors committed in La Vendée by what were called the *Infernal Legions*, commanded by himself, Ronsin, and Rossignol. He required no hint to assure us, himself, that he had written to the Ministry of War, and at the same time to the authorities, advising them to send wagons loaded with combustibles into La Vendée, to consume all the woods and coppices, and even all furze, heath, and broom, by fire, so as to cut off the retreat of the Vendeans.

"It is a terrible conception to be tolerated by reason," said Junot, when this man was gone; "and yet perhaps humanity itself would have followed that course, in order to put an end in six months to evils which lasted forty. It would at least have been more humane than letting lose upon them, like blood-hounds, the capitulated garrisons of Mayence and Valenciennes, and afterwards those *Infernal Legions*, led by the dregs of the most abject Jacobins."

I asked him why he would not tell me Santerre's name?

"Faith, because I did not care to introduce to you so creditable an acquaintance. I am not best pleased with his visits, and accordingly

* Nephew of Roland the minister, whose name was Roland de la Platière.

they are not very frequent. He is an amphibious creature; he is neither military, civil, citizen, nor artisan; he abandoned his own profession, and all the professions at whose doors he has knocked have refused him admission. Republican General as I am, it is not possible for me to give my hand in the middle of the Tuileries gardens to Santerre, *the Revolutionary General*,* which means General commanding the Revolutionary army, where the guillotine marched always in readiness, like a piece of artillery with the match alight. I do not like such characters," said Junot, "I am a republican by taste and principle; but I have a horror of the blood, the massacres, the confiscations, which constituted that frightful system of horror under which France groaned for several years. Santerre is a wretch, and he is under a sort of surveillance from the Staff of Paris, which obliges him to present himself, I believe, once a fortnight. Well! this man, I am sure, says now that I am haughty, and have not fraternized with him: no, certainly I have not, because I cannot esteem him."

I inquired whether he was brave; several officers, who had arrived since his departure, answered no; that is, that his reputation was extremely doubtful.

Santerre once wrote to the Commune of Paris, "Learn that I have burned all the mills, with one single exception, and this narrowly escaped; I fortunately learned before setting it on fire that it belonged to a patriot."

In a hamlet near Savenay he met with a young girl, who pleased him, and he told her so. Her instant answer was, that she was a Vendean, and he not only a Blue, but a chief of the Blues, and that consequently there existed between them obstacles which could never be removed. The girl had a grandfather, sixty-five years of age. The Chief of the Blues had the village again ransacked, and finally burnt; he then carried off the young girl and her unhappy grandfather, who died in a state of idiotcy from grief! Poor old man, and poor France!

At this period of my life no day passed that I did not see Napoleon, at least, unless my mother was very ill, and she was then better. It was easy for me to seek a conversation with him upon what I had seen, nor was he backward in questioning me of all that interested me, so that he was not long in ignorance of Santerre's visit. "How is that?" said Napoleon; "I thought he had been dead these four years. Well, what say you of him? Is he not handsome and

* Lannes, Bessières, and several other Generals of Napoleon, were known to entertain similar views.

engaging? These are the honest men who would fain see the happy days of 1793 restored. M. Santerre would find it delightful to obtain the epaulettes of Lieutenant-general as he did those of Brigadier-general, by leading to the scaffold men less worthless than himself. Did you know Rossignol?" I had never seen him; but in the course of a quarter of an hour I was perfectly acquainted with him, for his own question brought to the First Consul's recollection accumulated details respecting this man, Ronsin, and Charpentier, which were really curious; and Junot afterwards filled up their outlines for me.

"He is one of the most remarkable evidences that we can oppose to all that the manifestoes have said against us," observed the First Consul, when the name of Charpentier was mentioned. "That man commanded an army—that of the Rhine, at a time when we had every thing to fear; all our frontiers were exposed, like a dismantled town after an assault, yet perhaps no victories have been more splendid than those then gained by young soldiers, in absolute want of bread, shoes, money, and of clothing, and under generals such as Charbonnier, Santerre, Ronsin, and Rossignol. Rossignol, speaking of *Les Echelles* in Savoy, said one day in a committee of public safety, with perfect seriousness—

"'I can easily understand that my infantry could pass, because my men, however loaded, can mount *a ladder*; but for my cavalry and artillery, though a thousand devils should interfere, they could not teach a horse to climb a *ladder*.'"

On the subject of General Charbonnier, no one was more amusing than M. Dietrich, the lively young officer I met at the Opera the evening of the infernal machine. He had served on the staff in Holland, when Vandamme, happily for the army, was also there. It was one morning ascertained that the English had landed. M. Dietrich was instantly sent to the head-quarters of the General-in-chief; this was General Charbonnier, who, though it was but little after nine, was found at table and already half intoxicated.

"General," said he to the unprepared commander, "the English have landed—your orders are urgently wanted; be pleased to honour me with them, and I will instantly set out again."

The booby of a pretended warrior looked at him with eyes somewhat unsettled, and inquired—

"Art thou a good patriot?"

"Yes, my General."

"Well! seat yourself there; breakfast, and send the English to the devil."

M. Dietrich was then but eighteen, full of gaiety and mirth; and certainly his mirth could not want a better occasion; but he feared General Vandamme, who, he very well knew, was capable of shortening him by the head, had he failed in any part of his duty. Aware of the critical nature of his situation, he endeavoured, while the General-in-chief employed himself in swallowing some dozens of Ostend oysters, to persuade him into giving orders for the regiments to march; but finding all his efforts unavailing, he was at length resolving to return to the Chief of the Staff, when Charbonnier, who, like all drunkards, had one fixed notion, recalled him.

"Stay there," said he; "I am going to speak to you—take a glass."

"Thank you, General, but it is too early; I am neither hungry nor thirsty."

"What! too early! I am wrong, then, in drinking and getting my breakfast? Well, thou art but a silly prattler. Take a glass, I tell you."

M. Dietrich accordingly drank his health, in hopes of coaxing him, and being permitted to retire, but the latter was more easily proposed than executed.

"So," said the General, "you are a good patriot?"

"Yes, General, a very good patriot; but, unhappily, so insignificant a point is not the present question. A serious object has brought me here. General Vandamme is expecting me, and is meanwhile exposed to the enemy's fire." There had been some fighting, and an hour's suspension of arms had been agreed on, to await M. Dietrich's return. Vandamme was one of the bravest men in the world, but fiery and passionate, and quite capable of surprising and killing General Charbonnier. The young officer's head was filled with these reflections; he had no hope but in the General's speedily rising from table, and that a cup of coffee might sober him. Suddenly he heard the cannon, and a brisk fire of musketry; and starting up, he exclaimed—

"Do you hear? do you hear? In the name of Heaven, General, call one of your officers, and send orders!"

"What is the matter now? Leave me alone, you and your —— republic. Leave me alone to finish my breakfast, as becomes a General-in-chief."

"But General——"

"Ah! this is too much; I repeat to you, once for all, leave me in peace."

"But, General, you are exposing the army to the greatest danger."

"Bhrrr!"—and he began to sing.

"General Vandamme's division cannot possibly hold out without support. It will be compelled to yield the ground! Where would you have it take refuge, if obliged to fly?"

"Ah! they in flight!—they! No, no!—and if they should, leave them alone; the fools know the roads well enough."

At that moment the quick gallop of a horse was heard; and in less than a minute General Vandamme was in the room, and his sabre whizzing round the ears of Charbonnier.

A nobler figure than that of General Vandamme at this period cannot well be imagined; his finely-formed head, his regular features, his beautiful curly hair, his glistening eyes, which, when angry, seemed to flash fire, his exquisitely-turned hand, altogether opposed a perfect contrast to the ignoble appearance of Charbonnier. Vandamme, justly incensed, stood before his brutalized chief, making his sword fly round his head, and recommending him to prepare for instant death.

"This is thy last hour, wretch! How! is thy soul base enough to deliver up thy comrades to be massacred by the enemy, and that enemy the English? Let every thing be instantly in order; let the troops march, or rather stay here and sleep thyself sober; the army has no need of thee to conquer." And pushing Charbonnier from him with a violence that flung him to the farther end of the room, he went away with Dietrich, and both jumping on their horses, rushed into the midst of the fire just as the artillery opened.

Vandamme's valour in circumstances doubly critical from the stupidity or treason of Charbonnier was eminently conspicuous. The incapacity of one might have destroyed the army, but the courage and conduct of the other saved it. This was the first attempted descent of the English, before the arrival of Brune in Holland. Charbonnier, after the departure of Vandamme, began to grow gradually sober. The cannonading was so incessant that he could not doubt the whole army was engaged. In the midst of his intemperance, and of that thick cloud which blocked up every avenue to his brain, he yet retained some portion of that bravery which made him originally remarkable, and had procured for him the appointment of a military pro-consul. He plunged his head into water, and mounting his horse, hastened to the battle; but all was already retrieved by General Vandamme.

Afterwards, when peace and order had revisited us, the First

Consul awarded to each his due. Charbonnier returned to the rank of a chief of battalion, and had the command of a garrison. It was this same Charbonnier, who, receiving one day despatches from the Convention, which directed him to wait ulterior orders (*des ordres ultérieurs*), spent a whole week in seeking on the map the village *Ultérieur*.

Another time, when he was giving very particular orders for the passage of cavalry from Antwerp, the Commissary, who had attentively followed Charbonnier's finger on the map, ventured to ask him where the road was?

"What!" said the General, "do not you see this road?"

"I see nothing, General."

"How!" and he stamped, for he was passionate. "How! not see that road, it is large enough, however, it is superb. I am sure it is more than a hundred feet wide."

I can well believe that, for it was the Scheldt.

CHAPTER LXI.

M. Charles and reflected reputations—Indispensable antecedents—Madame Bonaparte at the Serbelloni Palace—Observancy of Madame Le Clerc—Bonaparte's eyes, and the Palace of the Hall of the Throne—Arrest of Mons. Charles at Milan—Conversation with Pauline Bonaparte—Reciprocal affliction and consolation—Madame Bonaparte's first residence at Malmaison—Madame La Générale—Sister Rosalie and the almoner of the army of Egypt—The master in the master's absence—Madame Bonaparte's divorce advised by Gohier—Return from the army of Egypt, and banishment of M. Charles—Bonaparte and Duroc on the Boulevards, and unexpected rencounter—Junot's friendship for M. Charles—The true friends of Junot.

Amongst the friends introduced to me by Junot, were some whose names especially attracted my attention; for instance, Monsieur Charles, born at Romans, of an obscure family, who entered the army at the commencement of the revolution, in a troop of cavalry formed at Besançon, and was a lieutenant when, being ordered into Italy, he was attached as assistant to the Adjutant-general Le Clerc at Milan; and when the latter, on his marriage with Pauline Bonaparte, was made a brigadier-general, Charles was also promoted to the rank of captain, and appointed aide-de-camp to the General.

Just at this time Madame Bonaparte (Josephine) arrived at Milan,

and lodged at the Serbelloni Palace, where she had an establishment as a sovereign.

M. Charles was introduced to her in common with all the officers of the army, and as she belonged to the establishment of General Bonaparte's brother-in-law, he obtained more than common attention.

Napoleon, almost always absent from home, was either occupied in the town of Milan or on journeys in the neighbourhood; he therefore did not see any thing that transpired there, but what fell immediately beneath his own eye; his sister, Madame Le Clerc, was not like him; she was unoccupied, but desired some sort of employ, and therefore commenced a strict observance of the conduct of a sister-in-law whom she hated, such an occupation being as good as any other: but I believe she deceived herself, for although she was not long in ascertaining that M. Charles and Madame Bonaparte were in close communication, and that this intimacy occupied much of their thoughts, she found that this attachment might be, but was not in fact, any thing more than a tender friendship.

M. Charles was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age; small, well-made, with good features, a dark clear complexion, and hair black as jet; he was altogether attractive, although a little deficient in the fine polish of elegant society. He wore a superb hussar's uniform covered with gold lace, and breakfasted at the Serbelloni Palace whenever Napoleon left it, and no one in the army or in the town of Milan was a stranger to the lively interest Madame Bonaparte testified for him.

It reached at length the General-in-chief. Through whom? Probably his own eyes! So it might certainly be presumed; for those penetrating eyes constituted the sole police of the throne-room at the Tuileries: and such was their clearness and precision, that the darkest corner of the hall would scarcely avail to escape their piercing inquisition. Be this as it may, at the head-quarters of the army of Italy it was suddenly rumoured that M. Charles had been arrested by order of the General-in-chief, and would certainly be shot. This is not an imaginary episode, like that, for example, of making a person speak at Messouh-Diah, who never was there. What I report is fact. I do not answer for the cause of General Bonaparte's displeasure against M. Charles; I am narrating only, and though, like Werther, I should narrate the same thing for the tenth time, I could say no more than I do, that M. Charles was arrested against the will, and perhaps on account of *Madame la Générale-en-chef;* a proceeding very grievous to them both, at least so it may be presumed. Madame Le Clerc, who was known to be *goodness itself*, said to me, "In short, conceive, Lau-

rette, that my sister-in-law had nearly died of vexation; and we certainly do not die of vexation from merely parting with our friends. There must be more than friendship concerned in this matter. For my part, I have comforted my brother, who was very unhappy. He was aware of it all when he came to Paris, before he set out for Egypt. Poor brother!"

And the kind sister pitied him most liberally, for the unhappiness which she herself had probably caused him. Madame Le Clerc was a droll character to study. She has been well sketched and well painted; but so strange was her character, that no one has ever succeeded in making a finished picture of her.

M. Charles was obliged to quit the army of Italy, and returning to Paris, the interest of Madame Bonaparte procured him a partnership in the mercantile house of Louis Bodin; there he made a great fortune, which was afterwards impaired. He kept a good house, and associated with the bankers, the only class which held regular receptions at the time of Madame Bonaparte's return from Italy, and her husband's departure for Egypt. It was then she purchased Malmaison, and established herself there, as the lady of a castle might have done in days of yore, while her lord and master set forward to deliver the tomb of Christ. Then, as now, there was always a page, an equerry, a nephew, a bachelor in short, and sometimes even (whisper it only in the ear) a good abbé. Ask little John de Saintré, who took charge of the afflicted widow, while the husband grieved after his own fashion under some palm-tree, within view of the holy sanctuary, as poor Fourès can bear witness. The result of all these afflictions and consolations was, that no one wept while they lasted; it was only on awaking that cries and tears were brought into exercise. It would seem that in such occurrences, both men and women are like children, who, after giving themselves a tap against a table or door, would continue their play, insensible of any pain, did not their mothers, ever on the watch to cry wolf, rush forward, snatch up the child, and make him so thoroughly ashamed of not having cried, that he instantly enters upon his functions with a vehemence that might deafen the very saints.

Madame Bonaparte was established at Malmaison, and there passed the greater part of her time.

A friend of my mother, who was inhabiting Ruelle, used to tell us that she saw *Madame la Générale*, the name she was known by in the village, walking very late in the garden. "By moonlight," said Rosalie, "and when, leaning on the arm of her son, her white dress and flowing veil are contrasted with his dingy attire of black or blue,

the effect is quite fantastic. They might be taken for phantoms. Poor woman! she is then thinking, perhaps, of her first husband, who fell a victim to the revolutionary executioners! Thinking also of him, by whom, through the mercy of Providence, her loss is repaired, and of whom a cannon-ball may in a moment deprive her. How does he manage, down yonder, to hear mass amidst all those Turks, Mademoiselle Laure?" asked the pious girl. "Why, I suppose he has an almoner," answered I; and at that time I really believed it.

Madame Bonaparte sometimes came to Paris to visit Barras, Madame Tallien, and Madame Gohier, to whom she was very partial: sometimes she would also see her mother and brothers-in-law, but not often, for she did not like them; the war, however, though certainly mutual, was not opened on their side. She was then in direct hostility with Joseph, the mildest and best of men, and at enmity with Madame Bonaparte the mother, and Madame Lucien, an angel of goodness and perfection. I know not what caused the animosity that had arisen between them, but I was sufficiently acquainted with Madame Lætitia and Madame Christine to answer for them.

Malmaison, at the time I am speaking of, was a pretty country-house with agreeable environs, as a residence, but very inconvenient and most unwholesome. Brunetière, who was somehow mixed up in the affair, told me that Madame Bonaparte had made this acquisition, as a child buys a new doll that strikes her fancy, without considering whether it will long amuse her. The park was small, sloping on all sides, and resembled a pretty English garden. It was enclosed, excepting the length of the lawn in front of the chateau, with a wall stretching along the road to St. Germain; the lawn was bordered with a ha-ha, on the brink of which stood a small flight of iron steps, affording a resting-place and a view over the road, which could also be seen from the park. The fine plantations that now surround the chateau, and all its out-offices, were not then in existence.

M. Charles inhabited Malmaison in the quality of master; friends, we know, have privileges. Gohier, who was always thrown into a brown study by the recollection of the 18th Brumaire, but was otherwise an honest and sensible man, strongly persuaded Josephine to a decided step.

"Divorce," said he, when all in tears she refused the advice he gave her to break off a connexion which compromised her in the eyes of the world—"Divorce; you tell me it is only friendship that exists between M. Charles and yourself; but if that friendship is so influential that it impels you to violate the observances of the world, I shall say to you, as if it were love, divorce; because friendship so exclusive

of all other sentiments will stand in lieu of all others. Believe me, all this will cause you regret." Gohier was right; he saw the matter in its true light, but Josephine would not listen.

When, after his return from Egypt, Bonaparte was on the point of himself effecting what Gohier had some months previously advised should be done prudently and quietly, Josephine screamed, wept, and was in despair. She would not hear of a divorce when he was at a distance, much less could she endure it when the resplendency of his unfading glory enlightened all Europe with its rays; but in consenting to surrender his proposal, he exacted as an absolute condition, the banishment of M. Charles, and her promise to never see him more.

Napoleon detested M. Charles; he never mentioned him, or suffered him to be named in his presence. But I know some incidents on this subject which have excessively surprised me, for I did not believe him susceptible of so much emotion.

One morning, when he was walking out with Duroc, to survey the works of the bridge at Austerlitz, which was then building, suddenly a cabriolet dashed at a rapid pace along the boulevard. Duroc felt the Emperor press his arm for support, and rest heavily upon it, and perceived him at the same time grow unusually pale. Duroc would have cried out for assistance, but the Emperor silenced him with, "It is nothing; be quiet!" The cabriolet contained M. Charles, whom Napoleon had not seen so close since he left Italy. What could be the sentiment which agitated him? Was it still love for Josephine? No; he loved her no longer: he was then attached to an enchanting woman, the only one he ever really loved. It could not be a movement of that self-love which makes the desertion of even an indifferent woman a source of suffering, since no one had seen him in presence of his enemy. Yes, *his enemy*, Napoleon considered this man as such, and hated him.

Not so Junot; he had been intimately associated with M. Charles in Italy, and they entertained for each other a mutual and sincere friendship. Junot did not always bestow his regard so well; he was far more easily deceived by appearances than I was on his behalf; frequently granting his friendship where it was betrayed, while he denied it to his true friends. How long did he distress me respecting Duroc! but at length he recovered his reason. Duroc was the best of friends. M. Charles purchased, in the year 1803 or 1804, a property called Casan. His affairs being subsequently much embarrassed, it was sold, and he retired to Romans, his native town, where he lived retired and respectably.

CHAPTER LXII.

Napoleon's detractors—Sister Rosalie and Antichrist—Superior men appreciators of Bonaparte—Beurnonville and Kléber's *bon-mot* upon General Bonaparte—Kléber's letters—Bonaparte's eyes turned towards the East—Projects of a great man—Desire of preserving Egypt—Explanation of Bonaparte's return from Egypt—The army of Drusus—The successors of Kléber—General Menou—Junot, Lanusse, and the consequences of a duel—Bonaparte's enmity towards Tallien.

I HAVE already observed, at the commencement of these Memoirs, that I am neither an accuser nor apologist, but relate as I have seen them, all the events, the facts and the incidents of which, for thirty years of my life, I have been a witness: some of them, I am well aware, will clash with the opinions or rather the dictum of certain individuals; I am sorry for it, but the path I have marked out for myself, neither changes its direction nor its impulse. I am only provoked by absurdities, even more ridiculous than offensive. But how it is possible to be moderate while I listen to the yelping, croaking, hissing, and groaning of pigmies, against the memory of a man, so far exalted above their level that they must strain their necks almost to dislocation even to survey the height on which he stands? It is to reduce him to their own standard that they seek to lessen and degrade him. I can conceive many reasons for Napoleon's not being beloved. Let him then be called the Attila of his age, the devastator of the world, or even, according to my poor sister Rosalie, the Antichrist; for all these epithets many occurrences of his life may afford justification. But that beings perfectly unknown, whose names have not emerged from the night of oblivion, thrusting their heads through the windows of their obscurity, should from thence exclaim, "Bonaparte! what then has he effected? the misfortune of France, that is all! What is there beyond this so extraordinary in him?"

Poor creatures! It is not your unmeaning words that can form the estimate by which such a man may be measured. You do not comprehend him; leave him to his glory, and content yourselves with your nonentity. Does his glory fatigue you? Do not trouble yourselves to seek it: it surrounds you, encompasses you on all sides; it is reflected in a thousand ways from those very masses of ruins which

you are daily raking up to serve you as materials for the erection of a new edifice. Every where you encounter that glory, for Napoleon is associated with France.

Look at the *broderies* and the silks of Lyons; the cotton manufactories of Rouen; the cannon foundry at Douai; the lace from Brussels; the muskets of Saint-Etienne; the cambrics of Valenciennes; the muslins of Saint-Quentin; the silks and gloves, and at Paris that immense commerce that extends itself to every object of luxury.

One particular, not surprising to me, but to which I would call attention, is, that all the first-rate talents of the day have avoided either thinking or speaking ill of Napoleon. They are sensible of the ridicule of those minds which are not sufficiently capacious to embrace his character. Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Casimir Delavigne, the Abbé de la Mennais, all these men have passed judgment on the colossus; they have seen and blamed his faults, but have recognised his great qualities: these learned men have not spared their criticism, mingled with approbation. Kléber, though his enemy, yet profoundly knew and admired him, because his fine genius was capable of appreciating greatness.

When Bonaparte was general-in-chief in Italy, other generals, jealous of that young head so skilfully useful to his country, could not assemble but they must discuss, with reflections not over charitable, the military operations of the young General, who, as some said, after having announced his intention of conquering Italy, like another Hannibal, was now gone, like him, to take his sleep at Capua. This was in allusion to his retiring on Piedmont after having threatened Lombardy. Kléber, who had talent enough to understand this manœuvre, and who, being yet a stranger to Napoleon, was not then at variance with him, which, it may be observed, he uniformly was with the general commanding him, rendered full justice to Bonaparte's abilities both military and civil; and on these occasions always defended him against the mediocrity which attacked him, with that vigour and generosity inspired by a concurrence of talent and of courage.

Above four-and-twenty original letters of Kléber are in my possession. These letters are remarkable for their clearness and precision, and particularly for the admirable skill displayed by their writer at the very time when the English considered him ruined and without resource. Junot bore Kléber that animosity which he entertained towards all who disliked Napoleon; yet he appreciated him to the full extent of his merit, for, having served under his orders in the Syrian expedition, he had opportunities of observing his masculine and superior mind.

We have seen the time when to censure Napoleon was the fashion, not only as regards his faults, but even the glorious years of his life. His flight from Egypt was characterized as *an unworhty exploit:* but these persons attacked his reputation merely because it was great.

From the time that I attained the age of reason and the capacity of understanding Bonaparte, from the day that my youthful ears became familiar with his plans and projects, I have always seen and understood that his most ardent desire was that of operating a revolution, and effecting a great movement in the East. When the Egyptian expedition was eventually resolved on, he was its chief promoter. Is the Directory supposed to have originated the glorious conception of planting the tri-coloured flag on the summit of the Pyramids? No —it was Bonaparte. The Directory, anxious to be quit of him, as of Hoche when they sent him to Ireland, acceded to all Napoleon's demands with the secret conviction that he could never return from those pestilential shores. Bonaparte was haunted by visions of the East. He would sometimes dilate on this subject for three hours without intermission, and often uttered the greatest follies with inconceivable seriousness. He frequently conversed on the subject of the East with our friend the Rear-admiral Magon, questioning him upon India; he could not be better pleased than in satisfying his inquiries. Napoleon would listen with avidity, watching the Rear-admiral's countenance, and seeming to snatch the words from his lips. Sometimes he would exclaim—

"It is there—it is in India we must attack the English power. It is there we must strike her! The Russians will not allow us a passage to Persia: well, then, we must get there by another road. I know that road, and I will take it!"

Originally, Turkey was the scene of his projects; but his ideas were afterwards very differently pointed, and embraced a practicable plan. When the Egyptian expedition was at last decided on, Napoleon said to Junot and to some others of his intimate officers—

"I am going to repair, if possible, the misfortune of our ravaged or lost colonies. Egypt will be a magnificent compensation; and the acquisition of that beautiful country for France shall be the object of this expedition."

Such were his predominant views during the passage, on his arrival, and while he resided there. How much did he suffer when he saw his fleet consumed, and all the means of internal safety endangered by that loss!

As I am now at the period of the return of the army from Egypt, I shall continue my narrative, and produce my proofs.

If many men, such as my husband, my brother-in-law, Duroc, Berthier, Lannes, Bessières, and some others, who, like them, knew the thoughts of Napoleon, had to answer those who pretend to talk of his flight, their victory would be easy. That man must himself have very unworthy and incompetent conceptions—must be susceptible of very pitiful passions and very contracted sentiments, who can impute to another the motives which have been attributed to him for leaving Egypt: for suppositions have at last been resorted to for deciding so important a point; and where a case evidently is incapable of proof, it must be argued from probabilities.

Now what is the language of probability? First, that General Bonaparte returned to Europe to fetch succours which the Directory had long refused him. Secondly, that General Bonaparte, informed of the cruel situation of France, listening to the ambition which four years of unintermitting triumphs had awakened, set out for Europe in order to seize the reins of power for himself, while snatching them from hands which were weighing down his country under a sceptre of iron.

Here are two versions: the one ostensible, the other disguised. I think the judgment should determine on the last, for I am willing to be reasonable.

As soon as General Bonaparte learnt through Sir Sydney Smith the real state of affairs in Europe; that the Russians were heaping with French corpses the beautiful fields of Italy, the theatres of so many victories, and which he had left verdant with the laurels planted by his soldiers; that anarchy was about to open the gates of France to foreigners; that our provinces, ravaged by robbers, were on the point of perishing by the yet more terrible disaster of a forced loan: when he looked around him, and saw that the safety of his army equally depended on the reinforcements which he had in vain expected from Europe, his resolution was taken; he determined to encounter a thousand dangers to come and demand of the Directory an explanation of the miseries of the country, and of the absolute neglect to which the army of the East was condemned. Such were the thoughts of Napoleon; and if at the instant of setting his foot in the vessel which reconducted him to France, they were found in alliance with that of being one day her ruler, his glory had already placed him on a pinnacle whence his glance might survey the heights of power without himself being taxed with presumption.

Incalculable were the dangers which beset his return to France. The English, the Turks, the Arabs, even the Russians, but above all, those Corsairs who infest the Mediterranean, presented altogether as

many impediments as there were waves to impede the vessel. He dared them all: and what fate was reserved for him? Captivity on all sides; perhaps slavery and death not far distant. With what terrible destiny then did Egypt threaten him, that he should be a fugitive? He had just obtained a signal victory: and the conqueror of Aboukir, assuming a more formidable aspect with respect to the inhabitants of Egypt, had the means of enforcing contributions hitherto withheld, but which the first summons would now produce. It is also said, that on the 20th of March, 1799, Bonaparte had received official news from Europe, announcing the continental war. This is stated in a book generally of superior accuracy, but I am obliged to contradict it in the present instance;* General Bonaparte received no news at the time stated. The last which reached him was from Genoa, despatched ten months before by the French Consul in the Ligurian Republic. This determination was therefore fixed by the news he received from the English. The only circumstance for which he deserves censure, is, having carried with him three men of more weight than millions of soldiers, Lannes, Murat, and Marmont; and Berthier may be added to the number. His own name was powerfully influential on the temperament of the soldiers. Yet Kléber, Desaix, Regnier, Rampon, Friant, Davoust, Lanusse, Damas, Dugua, Menou, and a multitude of other distinguished generals, were still left, and possessed a perfect knowledge of the country, so that they were competent to conduct with ability the army that remained.

Bonaparte's ardent passion for the retention of Egypt, is so well known to all who were with him, that it appears to me impossible for the most perverted mind to see his return to Europe in any other light than as a struggle for the preservation of that colony, which in his very dreams formed a nucleus for the incessant discharge of shafts against England. Was his project of forming a junction with an army of thirty thousand Druses near Mount Lebanon nothing? and that of conquering those parts of Egypt that were inhabited by tribes easily guided, uniting those tribes with his Druses, and attempting to penetrate into Persia, was this nothing?†

* The Memoirs of M. Montgaillard.

† In the war department were deposited some masks, made, it is said, in 1801. According to one version, they were designed to protect the soldier from excessive cold; according to another, they were intended to preserve the men, their eyes especially, from the very fine sand with which the deserts between Russia and Persia are covered, as the Emperor proposed prosecuting his enterprise in that direction, after making peace with Alexander on the Neva, as he had already done on the Niemen.

One day, speaking of Egypt, he made use of an expression which I then thought very extraordinary, and I jokingly reminded him of it three days before his coronation.

"It is vexatious," said he, "to have been prevented meeting my Druses; *I missed my fortune.*"

General Menou had been long in the service before the breaking out of the revolution; had served in India, and had acquired in his travels a love of the marvellous sufficiently amusing, but which prevented all reliance on his tales. It is a singular coincidence, that this same general, the Marquis de Menou, who turned Turk in 1801, presided over the Constituent Assembly on the 19th of June, 1790, when those throngs were introduced, calling themselves Arabians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Americans, Poles, Prussians, &c. &c., and he very gravely replied to the oration of the Arabs: "Gentlemen, it was Arabia which gave the first lesson of philosophy to Europe; France now discharges the debt by giving you lessons of liberty." When commanding the republican troops, he was defeated at Saumur, by La Rochejaquelin and Lescure. On the 14th of October he commanded in Paris, but resigned.

Of an adventurous disposition, though no longer young, he joined the Egyptian expedition at his own desire. By the assassination of Kléber, after the battle of Heliopolis, he, as senior, succeeded to the command. His administration was able, but like the Generals of Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry, they were the charm of a supper, and the shame of an army. Abercrombie, with eighteen thousand Englishmen, landed at this same strand of Aboukir, and Menou lost the battle of Canopé, and with it the possession of Egypt. Shut up in Alexandria, and cut off from all communication with the rest of his army, he had not even the consolation of effecting the capitulation of Cairo, a charge which devolved upon Belliard: the definitive capitulation at length received his signature, and returning to Europe, he was well received by Napoleon, who appointed him Administrator-general of Piedmont.

One day, soon after the arrival of General Vial, the envoy of General *Abdalla* Menou, the First Consul being in his closet with Berthier, Junot, and Bourrienne, who were busily unsealing the numerous fumigated packets brought by General Vial, the First Consul hinted his intention of changing the General-in-chief of the Eastern army; he spoke of Menou, lauded his pleasing manners in a drawing-room, his agreeable manner of telling a story; "But," added he, "all this is useless at the head of an army; and Kléber, with his cynical sayings, and his rough exterior, was far better suited to the

army of Egypt in its present situation." The Generals then in Egypt came under consideration, and when Berthier named some of them, he shook his head; at length, he resumed the conversation after a long silence, and as if talking to himself:

"Regnier?—Damas?—Friant?—No, none of these. Belliard?—He is a child, though a brave one.—Old Le Clerc?—No.—Well! after all, Abdalla Joseph Menou serves our turn best yonder, Berthier; but we must give him an able chief of the staff, or rather second in command, and here, we have a choice."

This suggested an idea to Junot. "General," said he, "you know what you are about, but I know whom I should choose." The First Consul turned on him an interrogative look.—"General Lanusse."

"Oh! oh! you do not bear malice?"

"Why should I, my General? I fought Lanusse for a foolish gaming quarrel, which, besides, was but a pretext. I thought he was not attached to you, that he partook the sentiments of General Damas."

"Oh! as to him, he does not like me, indeed!—Well, I have a great mind to appoint him."

"General Damas, my General?"

"Yes. Lanusse has talent and courage, but Damas is not behind him in either, and as a general officer he is of quite a different caliber: besides Lanusse has confounded democratical notions, and is in correspondence, as well as his brother, with a man so immoral as to compromise even his acquaintances: think of the effect M. Tallien's friendly support must produce. I do not like M. Tallien. I hate that man; he is wicked himself, and a corrupter of others. The two Lanusses are both gamesters, and they have learned it of him. But Damas, he is an Aristides."

This was true. Damas was one of those virtuous and extraordinary men whom nature but rarely moulds.

He died only two or three years ago, in the Rue du Saint Père, Faubourg St. Germain, in the bosom of his numerous family; his obsequies denoted indigence, and borrowed all their solemnity from the presence of a group of Generals, his former brethren in arms. General Edward Colbert, his aide-de-camp in Egypt, pronounced his funeral oration, in which he loudly professed his attachment to his former General.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Lucien's embassy to Madrid—Bonaparte's orders relative to Egypt—Lucien's letter to General Menou—The most interesting of our colonies—The most faithful friend of the Republic—Reduction of Egypt, and tardy mission—Sicily—Naples and M. Alquier—The sister of the Queen of the French—Mesdames de France at the Palace of Caserte—M. Goubaud, the Roman painter—The Princesses and the tricoloured cravat—The painter of the Emperor's and King of Rome's cabinet—Remarkable picture.

About this time, Lucien, having accomplished the principal object of his embassy in Spain, turned his attention to his brother's orders respecting Egypt, and sent my brother-in-law, M. Geouffre, on a mission to General Menou: he had at first selected for that service M. Clement, first adjutant of the consular guard, and embarked him at Barcelona; but the secret had not been well kept; the English were apprized of the hour of sailing, and M. Clement, with his written instructions, fell into their hands.

Lucien was satisfied of my brother-in-law's entire devotion to him, and felt, moreover, assured, that with his address, experience, and knowledge of the world, he would not suffer his mission to miscarry, even though he should be taken by the English, who lay in wait at the entrance of every port, to take every vessel that ventured from shore. The following is M. Geouffre's letter of credence:—

"*Spanish Embassy.* Liberty. Equality.

"Madrid, 4th Thermidor, IXth year of the French Republic, one and indivisible.

"*The Ambassador of the French Republic in Spain, to the General Menou, Commander-in-chief of the Army of the East.*

"The First Consul wishing, my dear General, to convey some important despatches to you, I committed them to Citizen Clement, a superior officer of the consular guard, whom I despatched from Barcelona the 14th Ventose last. I took advantage of his departure to address to you the letter, of which a copy is hereto annexed. But the vessel which transported him having been seized by the English

within sight of Alexandria, I could not by that medium acquaint you with the lively interest I feel in your success, and the zeal here manifested in seconding it. In order to repair the unfortunate result of Citizen Clement's voyage, I send to you Citizen Geouffre, one of the private secretaries of my embassy, who will inform you with what solicitude the government attends to every thing that can ameliorate the condition of our brave army.

"Within four months I have transmitted to you, from the ports of Spain *alone*, FIFTEEN vessels, laden with provisions and munitions of war. The ports of France and Italy have equally been engaged in multiplying your resources. A squadron consisting of five vessels, and commanded by Rear-admiral Gantheaume, should by this time have furnished you with new means of defence. Considerable armaments are already in preparation to fly to your assistance. Your wants are the Consul's first thought, and not a moment is sacrificed when an opportunity offers of requiting your generous efforts for the preservation of the most interesting of our colonies.

"The pacific attitude of Europe must assure you, my dear General, that the success of these measures will ultimately answer our expectations, whatever obstacles England may oppose to us. We have already bereft her of all her continental allies. The peace of Luneville, the articles of which I transmit, while it has spared Austria the disgrace of seeing our standards float on the walls of Vienna, has gained us powerful friends in Germany, and leaves none but her maritime foes to destroy. The Holy See and the kingdom of Naples have likewise united their interests with ours. Nearly all the ports of Italy are closed against British ships, and the Consul, desirous of securing the just supremacy of France in that country, has just conferred the crown of Etruria on the infant Don Louis, son-in-law of the King of Spain, THE MOST FAITHFUL FRIEND OF THE REPUBLIC.* A French army, encamped under the walls of Ciudad Rodrigo, at this moment menaces the southern provinces of Lusitania; but the first successes of the Spanish arms against that power speedily led to pacific overtures. Every thing justifies the presumption that Portugal is about to ally herself with France.

"Such is the aspect of the political affairs of Europe; such is the brilliant situation of our country, my dear General. France, Spain, and Batavia have created new fleets, and will in concert call England to account for all the evils which for twelve years she has inflicted on mankind. In defiance of her ingenuity in intercepting your corres-

* This last phrase is particularly marked in the original.

pondence with us, all Europe has resounded with your triumphs; the death of Abercombie opened our eyes upon his defeat. We are conscious of your wisdom, and of the valour of the brave troops you command. We know that you are fortified by their confidence; and in spite of the most pressing necessities, in spite of the dangers which encompassed them, we despaired not of their constancy. They are Frenchmen, and the enemy they contend with is England. Against such an enemy the companions of Menou can only come forth victorious.

"Citizen Geouffre will afford you all the private details you can desire respecting the changes and proceedings of our interior administration, our political relations with the northern powers, and the results which may be expected from the coalition of those powers against England. The desire of distinguishing himself by some brilliant action, is the principal motive which attracts the Citizen Geouffre to your neighbourhood; he will soon obtain your good opinion, and I can guarantee his zeal. He served in France as adjutant-general, you can employ him in the same capacity. Grant him the means, the possible opportunity of distinguishing himself. All posts occupied by Frenchmen are, I know, posts of honour; but a preference in those of danger is a pledge of favour which I ask on his behalf.

"I have, besides, commissioned him to give increased and better combined activity to the commercial relations between Egypt and France; he will submit to you the instructions I have given him on this subject, that they may obtain your approbation, without which he will undertake nothing. Should you have any satisfactory intelligence to convey to the First Consul, I shall be gratified by your making him the bearer. You may rely on his zeal, his discretion, and his desire to please you.

"Accept, my dear General, the full expression of my sentiments, and of the very affectionate consideration with which I am penetrated for you.

"LUCIEN BONAPARTE."

This letter M. Geouffre concealed in the lining of his waistcoat, the other despatches were secured from discovery in the best way possible, and his most important communications for the General-in-chief were verbal. The French ambassador obtained an order from the King of Spain for the arming of an American vessel; my brother-in-law embarked in the disguise of a sailor, and as far as Malta the voyage was favourable. There he was informed of Menou's capitu-

lation; but not being able absolutely to rely on his authority, determined, as the safest course, to seek some Italian port, and attaching two of his brother sailors to his fortunes, they took flight in a small boat, and landed on the Sicilian coast, which they found entirely deserted, the inhabitants being frightened away by the frequent invasions of Algerine corsairs. The sanitary laws of Sicily were that year excessively severe, under the apprehension, not only of the plague, but also of the yellow fever, which was raging violently in Spain. As the operations of these laws would have subjected him to extreme inconvenience and delay, M. de Geouffre took every possible precaution to avoid observation, and found an asylum for the night in an old chapel, whose ruins gave melancholy evidence of the devastation committed by the pirates. The next morning a priest who was passing the ruined chapel on his road to Palermo, undertook, at my brother-in-law's request, the delivery of two letters from him; one to the Spanish Consul, who also fulfilled the functions of the French Consulate, and the other to the Governor of Palermo, in both of which, with a very slight and excusable departure from truth, he represented himself as attached to the Spanish Embassy. The next day the priest returned with favourable answers, and M. Geouffre, with his two sailors, whom he amply recompensed, and the priest, who served him by the road both as interpreter and paymaster, arrived at Palermo, where he was most graciously received by the Spanish Consul, and procured through his means every facility for his progress to Naples. From that place he embarked in a small felucca, and landed at the foot of the mole, certain of finding at the house of the French Ambassador Alquier, whom Lucien Bonaparte had succeeded at Madrid, every accommodation he could desire. With Alquier no secrecy was necessary on the subject of his Egyptian mission, and they lamented together its ill success, and the important loss the nation had sustained. The French Ambassador presented my brother-in-law at the Neapolitan court, then in all its brilliancy, and preparing for the double nuptials of the Prince of Asturias with a Neapolitan princess, sister of the present Queen of the French, and of the infanta Donna Marianna with the Prince Royal of Naples. The Princess of Asturias I had the honour of being particularly acquainted with, and was much distinguished by her; her memory is very dear to me.

After a short stay in the beautiful and harmonious Parthenope, which still mourned the divine Cimarosa, my brother-in-law returned to Spain, having derived no other advantage from an expedition that

endangered both his liberty and life, than that of having seen Naples and its enchanting bay.

How intimate is the association of ideas! Parthenope has recalled to my mind a story that occurred in that same Italy, and very near Naples; it relates to Madame Adelaide and Madame Victoire, and happened at this period.

Mesdames de France inhabited the Castle of Caserte, a royal country-house belonging to the court of Naples.

Their court was still tolerably numerous, and to divert the tedium its younger members must otherwise have contracted, from their recluse mode of life, the Princesses frequently had little balls, composed only of their own suite. A single violin formed the orchestra, under the direction of M. Chazote, governor of the young Count de Chastellux. It seems he was not very clever, and that Collinet would not have been likely to engage him as his second; for he inhumanly mangled the most common airs, such as the *monaco*, *les deux coqs*, and other new dances. The dissonance was once so insupportable to the well-practised ear of Madame Adelaide, that starting from her seat, she took the violin from M. Chazote's hands, and her Royal Highness played through the whole country-dance with a taste and precision which equally called forth the gratitude and amazement of the dancers: for nearly all of them were ignorant that she could handle the instrument. Madame Adelaide appeared as well amused with fingering her bow as the dancers in following it; for no sooner had she concluded the country-dance she had carried off from poor M. Chazote, whom she told to "go and dance," than she turned her instrument, and issued the word of command, "To your places." But the Duchess de Narbonne, who perhaps thought the princess was forgetting her dignity, majestically crossed the room, and remonstrated with such firmness, that the excellent princess surrendered her own amusement, and that which she was conferring. A spectator has assured me, that nothing could be more picturesque and graceful, than Madame Adelaide, in her stiff gothic dress, playing so unusual a feminine instrument; at a little distance, Madame Victoire, who could never laugh, even in the saloons of Versailles, was now cold, serious, and severely melancholy, appearing to look with a reproving eye on her sister; while the young Louise de Narbonne, the ornament of the court, as she would have been of Versailles, and the two Countesses de Chastellux, all three young, pretty, and dressed with the simplicity becoming their age, formed a striking contrast with the starched exiles of the old court.

M. Goubaud, the young Roman painter of the household of the Princesses, made an exquisite sketch of this little scene.

Youth loves smartness, and is coquettish in males as well as females. This young M. Goubaud, who was in high favour both with Mesdames de France and Madame de Narbonne herself, who was never prodigal of her favour, was then a pretty boy of eighteen or twenty. One day he went out to attend one of those fairs or village fêtes, whose aspect is always precious to a creative imagination, ready to seize all subjects presented by nature. How much more precious in Italy, where all is grace, all perfection, in contour and feature, and when set off by the costume of the Neapolitan peasant! Every thing here is a subject for a painter; and what a subject!—the sea and Vesuvius for the back-ground.

Goubaud, while eyeing the pretty girls, paid no attention to the most courteous, and running after the most timid, suddenly spied an immense silk handkerchief, with a broad border of lively and glaring colours. The fête, the peasant girls, all disappear before the flattering idea that that very night, or on the morrow at farthest, he shall outshine the whole household of Mesdames in this large and many-coloured cravat. He purchased it, and returned to Caserte as enraptured with his bargain as if he had bought the Pope's tiara, which, be it said *en passant*, was not then at Rome.

The next day was Sunday, and it was the custom of the house for the Princesses to pass to mass through the ranks of their assembled household, inclining their heads, speaking to the women, smiling at the men, and, in spite of their perfect goodness, the wearisome code of etiquette had followed them across the Alps, and carried its mortal poison to Caserte. Goubaud, decked like a bridegroom, and proud as a peacock, had placed himself opposite to an open window, where he might appear in all the plenitude of his beauty. The usher of the chambers opening the folding-doors, announced Madame Victoire and Madame Adelaide. Madame Victoire, whose habitually calm countenance seldom endured the fatigue of any pointed expression, on perceiving the young Roman appeared perfectly astonished. She paused a moment, seemed about to speak; then, apparently unwilling to compromise her dignity, she recovered her composure, and passed on without noticing the confident and smiling salute of the good youth. He now waited Madame Adelaide, who was far more beloved than her sister; but she not only passed like Madame Victoire, without speaking to the young painter, but darted on him an indignant glance which distressed him. The Duchess de Narbonne, who followed, fixed on Goubaud a piercing look, which seemed to say, "What!

have you such audacity?" The young artist mentally reviewed every act of his that could possibly have given offence, and finally comforted himself with the reflection that the displeasure of his patronesses was undeserved.

The return from mass was equally solemn, and the whole establishment, modelling their conduct after that of the Princesses, seemed to shun Goubaud as if he had just imported the yellow fever from Cadiz.

The young artist, who had a grateful and susceptible heart, retired to his study, and gave himself up to melancholy reflections; scarcely had he entered, when a messenger from Madame de Narbonne brought him a very brief and precise order to quit Caserte that very day.

His patience now deserted him, and anger for a moment superseded grief; but his eyes falling on the magnificent view which unfolded before him all the magic images of beauty, surrounding a dwelling in which, welcomed as a friend, as a beloved child, he had passed the happiest days of his life, "I should be mad," thought he, "to retire without inquiring the cause of my disgrace," and he immediately requested a parting audience of Madame de Narbonne, who granted it on the instant; but as he entered, panting for breath, "What!" cried she in a fury and without giving him time to speak, "what! you have the boldness, the impudence, to present yourself before me in your odious cravat?"

Goubaud was confounded.

"My cravat, *Madame la Duchesse!* . . . ."

"Yes, sir, your cravat. Is not exile a sufficient misfortune? Must Adelaide and Victoire of France, the daughters of Louis XV., be persecuted in that exile, insulted even with the sight of a tricoloured flag?"

"*Ah, mon Dieu!*" cried Goubaud, and the immense corners of his cravat striking his eyes, he snatched it from his neck and stood dismayed, as if really criminal; the cravat was as perfect a tricolour as the flag which now waves over the Château of the Tuileries. The poor youth held in his hands the accusing witness, and believed it had been placed there by some mischievous demon who had fascinated his eyes.

Born and bred in Italy, and in retirement, he had never seen the tricoloured flag, nor even thought of it, but as associated with the misfortunes of those kind and beneficent Princesses for whom he would have laid down his life.

He had little difficulty in explaining the innocence of his intentions to the good-natured Duchess, who undertook to plead his pardon with

his benefactress. She soon returned from her compassionate mission to relieve the anxious expectant by an assurance of free pardon; presenting him at the same time, from the royal ladies, a packet containing a dozen superb white cravats, and ordering for the altar of the chapel a painting of the Assumption of the Virgin, which the grateful artist commenced without the loss of an hour, and in a few days his study was again visited by the Princesses, "to cement the pardon," as Mademoiselle Adelaide expressed herself.

This same Goubaud was afterwards cabinet painter to the Emperor Napoleon, and in 1813 was appointed painter to the King of Rome, and the children of France; and he has recently finished a splendid picture of the captive Napoleon. If you would see a work, the result of a pencil under the guidance of the heart, go and see this portrait. Go and behold the hero in solitude, fearless of observation, weeping over his distant country, over his son whom he will never more see, over all his friends estranged; over so many miseries accumulated on one head, that hatred herself, seeking revenge, would have proved impotent, unequal to such superlative success. Go view him on that rock, beaten by the winds, his arms crossed over that breast which encloses a heart still beating for France. Above him the atmosphere is desert; *the eagle is chased from it.* On the ground, vipers are dividing the bleeding limbs of the eaglets. This picture was in the last exhibition.

CHAPTER LXIV.

Malmaison—Its park—Bonaparte's project—Mademoiselle Julien—The mountain and the river—Interior of the château—Simplicity—Apartment of Mademoiselle Hortense—Manner of life at Malmaison—Female breakfasts—The tent, love of air, and the fire in summer—Facility of Madame Bonaparte in granting her protection—Madame Savary and Madame Lannes—Madame d'Houdetot and M. de Céré—Unexpected favour, mission, delay, and disgrace—The memorial and the bill.

As Malmaison is now like a lady stripped of all her ornaments, and even of her vestments, I shall endeavour to recall her to the memory of those who, like me, were of her acquaintance while she was still herself.

The park was enchanting, notwithstanding its close proximity to the barren mountain on the left. The river, though running far below,

imparted strength and luxuriance to its vegetation; and nothing could be greener, more fresh, or umbrageous, than the field from which it was separated only by a ha-ha, and that part of the park itself which is bounded by the road. The extent of the park did not exceed a hundred acres; and Bonaparte, on his return from Egypt, endeavoured to persuade Mademoiselle Julien, a rich old maid of the village of Ruelle, as an act of good neighbourhood, to sell him, at her own price, an adjoining garden, or small park, by which addition Malmaison would have been placed on so respectable a footing that he need no longer have blushed to compare it with the magnificent estate of his brother Joseph. The First Consul had a small private garden, separated only by a bridge from his private cabinet. It was here that he took the air, when labour rendered moderate exercise necessary to him; for at that time, and for two years succeeding, he allowed himself no repose but what nature imperatively required. The bridge was covered in and arranged like a little tent; here his table was carried, and he would employ himself with state papers, saying that he felt his ideas become more elevated and expansive in the air, than when seated beside a stove and shut out from communication with the sky.

Yet he could not endure the smallest degree of cold; had fires lighted in July, and wondered that others did not suffer like himself from the first breath of a north wind.

Our life at Malmaison, at the time of my marriage, resembled that usually led when much company is assembled together at a château in the country. Our apartments consisted of a chamber, a boudoir, and a room for the chambermaid, all very simply furnished. That occupied by Mademoiselle Hortense differed from the others only by a folding-door; and this apartment was not assigned her till after her marriage. All opened on a long and very narrow paved corridor, looking to the court.

We chose our own hour of rising; and till breakfast our time was at our own disposal. At eleven, the ladies all met for breakfast in a small low saloon of the right wing, opening to the court; but, as in Paris, gentlemen were never admitted to the party, unless, occasionally, Joseph, Louis, or one of the family. Breakfast was followed by conversation, or the reading of the journals; and some one always arrived from Paris to have *an audience;* for already Madame Bonaparte gave audiences, contrary to the express orders of the First Consul; and patronised petitions, though his anger at her interference had already caused her abundance of tears: but when a beautiful pearl necklace or bracelet of rubies was offered, through the hands of Bourrienne,

or of any other friend, the elegance of a present so wholly unconnected with the matters in hand, suppressed all curious speculations into the nature of the mine which produced it.

The First Consul was never visible till dinner-time. At five or six in the morning he descended to his cabinet, and was there occupied with Bourrienne, or with the ministers, generals, and counsellors of state, till the dinner-hour of six, when the party was generally joined by some invited guests. All the suite of the First Consul were at this time enlarging his household by marriage; Colonel Savary had just married a relation of Madame Bonaparate, an unhoped-for happiness to a man whose life knew no other impulse than the desire of advancement; his wife was pretty, but had bad teeth.

Madame Lannes was really handsome, and in high favour at Malmaison, of which she was every way worthy; gentle, unconscious of envy, and never sacrificing to a jest the peace or reputation of another. In person, she might have formed a model for the most beautiful Madonnas of Raphael or Correggio; such was the symmetry of her features, the calmness of her countenance, the serenity of her smile. I first saw her at a ball, where she scarcely danced, although her figure was light and elegant. In the dignified station to which fate exalted her, after the death of her husband, the Duchess de Montebello's conduct was perfectly irreproachable; and she was ever ready to oblige or serve others as far as was consistent with the severity of the Emperor, who would inevitably have discouraged and opposed any affair recommended by a woman, and with the apathy of the Empress, who, on quitting her early home, had not, as assuredly the Archduke Charles would have advised her, created for herself a new one. But to return to Josephine and her morning audiences. This was the only time that the surveillance of the First Consul left her at liberty, and he then committed the duty to Bourrienne, who tells us "he would have deemed it disgraceful to act as a spy on the wife of his friend," and therefore contented himself with concealing from the First Consul such acquisitions of jewellery, etc., as made no claim on the public finances. I must, however, do Madame Bonaparte the justice to say, that she saw nothing of all these intrigues, but confined herself to writing a few lines to Berthier, who had much more consideration for her than any of the other ministers; so little interest indeed had she with them, that importunity alone could not give any weight to her requests: the influence of Mademoiselle Hortense, had she exerted it, would have been far more effective.

But if Madame Bonaparte's credit with the authorities was at a low ebb, her reputation for it was also impugned by her own proceed-

ings: for example; amongst her most attached friends, was Madame Houdetot, and her interposition was for once successful in recommending that lady's brother, Monsieur de Céré, to the First Consul's favour, in which sense, good manners, and a pleasing address, rapidly advanced him. He was becoming a familiar on the establishment, when he was sent on a mission, and a certain day fixed for his return, after which he was to receive the appointment of aide-de-camp. But alas! youth is heedless, and M. de Céré exceeded his appointment by a whole fortnight. Napoleon, doubly incensed by the neglect of his orders, and by his own error of judgment, a circumstance not very common, would listen to no solicitations for pardon, and peremptorily prohibited the young man's reappearance before him; while Madame Bonaparte observed that "a volcanic head, leading into follies for want of reflection, should not be associated with the indolence of a creole."

After many months had elapsed, determined on a new effort to recover his lost ground, he solicited through the medium of his sister, and of Savary, who was also his friend, an audience of Madame Bonaparte, and to his great joy was desired to repair on the morrow to Malmaison, furnished with a very clear and explicit memorial, which Josephine promised to forward. Arriving at the château, he found Madame, as usual, gracious and enchanting: she told him that the First Consul, already predisposed by her, would easily overlook an irregularity which M. de Céré promised to obliterate by future good conduct, and concluded by receiving his memorial, and recommending him to come himself in a few days for the answer.

The poor young man, intoxicated with the success of his overtures, failed not to demand by anticipation the congratulations of his friends; but not yet taught reflection, he discovered, before retiring to rest, that the memorial was still in his pocket, and he had left as its substitute in the hands of his patroness a long bill from his tailor. In despair at an incident which threatened annihilation to all his new-raised hopes, he passed a sleepless night, and early in the morning was again on the road to Malmaison, determined, as his last chance, to explain the whole affair to Madame Bonaparte. His consternation may be imagined, when, advancing with outstretched hand to meet him, she anticipated his explanation with,

"How happy I am! I have delivered your memorial to the First Consul, and we read it together; it was admirably drawn up," added she, with an approving smile, "and made a great impression upon him. He told me Berthier should report it, and within a fortnight all will be settled. I assure you, my dear, this success, for I consider

the affair as concluded, made me the whole of yesterday the happiest woman in the world."

If the actual memorial had not been at that moment in his pocket, he would have persuaded himself it was really in the hands of the First Consul, and that his unhappy carelessness was all a dream.

From this instance it may be inferred that Madame Bonaparte, though perfectly good-natured, and with the utmost disposition to oblige, could not be entirely depended upon in the management of any affair. She was desirous to confer a favour, but this desire yielded to the smallest apprehension of the First Consul's displeasure.

Bonaparte was very partial to Malmaison, and insisted on all the visitors being entirely at their ease: it was always he who opposed the restraints of etiquette, which already Madame Bonaparte liked, and would fain have introduced, although as burdensome to herself as others.

CHAPTER LXV.

The Wednesdays at Malmaison—The stage company at Malmaison—Bonaparte treated like a boy—Dinners in the park—Party at Barriers, and the First Consul without his coat—Fright of Madame Bonaparte—Rapp, Eugène, and the veteran soldier recognised by the First Consul—Voluntary engagement—Curious and touching scene—Panic terror at Malmaison—The inhabitants in dishabille.

Every Wednesday there was a grand dinner at Malmaison, the Second Consul was always of the party, with the Ministers, the Counsellors of State, some particularly esteemed generals, and a few ladies of unspotted reputation; for Napoleon was then rigorous in the choice of Madame Bonaparte's society. We acted plays in the evening, and the part of the Abigails fell to my lot. Madame Savary was also of our company; Junot was our best actor, and Bourrienne, Eugène Beauharnais, and Lauriston, had talent. It was no trifle to play before not only an audience of three hundred persons, but the First Consul in particular; for my part I should have preferred doubling the number, could he have been by that means excluded. It was singular enough, that I, certainly the most free with him of the whole establishment, and the most ready to answer his pleasantries; I, in short, who already gave indications of the woman who, according to his own confession at St. Helena, treated him as a boy (*en petit garçon*), the day that he addressed to my ears words to which it did

not become me to listen; I could not endure his criticisms, just or unjust, on my performance, however convinced that he was mistaken, and that I best understood my own business with the assistance of Dugazon, my prompter.

The dinner-hour, as I have before said, was six; and when the weather was fine the First Consul ordered the table to be laid in the park on the left of the lawn; the dinner was soon despatched, and he found it wearisomely protracted, if we sat more than half an hour.

When he was in good humour, the weather fine, and he had a few minutes' leisure from the labour which at that time was killing him, he would play at barriers with us. He cheated us at *reversis*,* would throw us down, or come upon us without crying *barre!* but these tricks were only calculated to raise a laugh. His coat was on such occasions laid aside, and he ran like a hare, or rather like the gazelle, which he would feed with a boxful of tobacco, and tell her to run after us, and the tormenting animal tore our clothes and sometimes our legs.

One fine day after dinner, he exclaimed, "Let us play at barriers!" Off went his coat, and the next moment the conqueror of the world was racing like a schoolboy. The park at Malmaison was not then as complete as it now is, although the most shameful Vandalism has spared no efforts to extinguish the remembrances attached even to a few herbs. Fools! to imagine their power could destroy such a dwelling of its all-powerful magic. It was separated only by a ha-ha from an open field, afterwards purchased for a plantation, and the curious could observe from this field all that passed in the park. Madame Bonaparte had been leaning with Madame Lavalette on the iron railing which overlooked the ha-ha, when advancing a few steps, they were alarmed by the sight of two men, of rough manners, shabby dress, and very suspicious appearance, who were eyeing the First Consul, and whispering one another. I had ceased playing, and at this moment approached Madame Bonaparte, who took my arm, and sent Madame Lavalette to seek her husband or Eugène, but charged her to be careful that the First Consul did not discover her errand, for he detested all precautions. She met Rapp, who required no stimulating where but the shadow of danger threatened his general; in a few seconds he was beside the men, and, attacking them somewhat roughly, demanded their reason for standing there frightening ladies, and threatened them with arrest: they stoutly defended their right to

* A game of cards still in vogue with the Dowagers of the Faubourg Saint-Germain.

look at their general, who, they were certain, would not drive them away; and appealed to Eugène, who coming up at that moment to see what was the matter, recognised one of the intruders for an old chasseur of his regiment. The veteran explained in his humorous and military phrase, that the loss of his arm having disabled him for further service, his brother wished to be accepted as his substitute; and to arrange this affair they were come in search of their commander, when the sight of the First Consul at full play had arrested their steps; and having finished this explanation, they turned away.

Bonaparte, with his eyes which saw without looking, and his ears which heard without listening, had from the first word been in possession of a key to the whole scene; he remembered the old quartermaster of his chasseurs, who, at Montebello, or Marengo, had lost an arm while defending the life of a wounded officer. The First Consul had himself caused him to be carried off the field, and as the veteran had since been presented to him on a parade, he recalled his features. "Oh! oh!" said he, "there are the *Invalids* in retreat. Good day, my boy! Well! you are come to see me then? Come! face about; march once more at the command of your General; conduct him, Eugène."

And passing his arm round Josephine's waist he led her to the entrance of the château, where we met the two brothers, Eugène, and Rapp. The old chasseur presented his brother to the First Consul, reminding him, at the same time, that no legal obligations demanded his service.—"It is a voluntary engagement, my General," said he, "and you are his recruiting-captain."

"Since I am the recruiting-captain," said the First Consul, "the recruit must drink my health and that of the Republic; Eugène, take charge of your soldier, my boy; you will pledge him in my name."

The old chasseur watched the departing steps of his General, and when they disappeared from his sight, burst into tears.

"Come, come, my old comrade, a little more self-command," said Eugène; "why, the deuce, you are like a woman!"

"Ah! talking of women, a pretty mess I have made!" said the maimed veteran; "why, I have spoken to the *Générale Consule*, as if I were speaking to Nanny and Peggy. And yet she seems all goodness, yonder brave *Citoyenne*."

When the First Consul played at barriers, we all walked, and both cards and chess were superseded. This evening, therefore, he retired to his cabinet, and we saw no more of him. Madame Bonaparte had been so frightened by the sight of the men, that nothing

could rally her spirits. Eugène, Bessières, and Junot, were all returned to Paris, and no one remaining to hearten her, we spent the evening in enumerating and recounting all the attempts made within the last year against the life of the First Consul.

His wife loved him; the influence of gratitude, on a good heart, had bound her to him; she cried, and embracing me, said, "The figure of this man has made such a terrible impression on me, that I am certain I shall not sleep to-night. And Bonaparte, if he hears me complain, he is angry. He never has any thing to fear, according to his own account."

We all retired to our chambers with that susceptibility of nerve that pervades a party of children who have been listening to ghost-stories; and midnight had not struck before the whole château, buried in sleep, might have resembled that of Beauty in the Sleeping wood, if the moonbeams had not been occasionally seen to glimmer on the arms of those faithful guards, those *chasseurs à cheval*, who silently paraded the park, watching over the safety of him who was the safety of all. Suddenly, a report of fire-arms was heard from the ditch of the château, and instantly, before we could recover our respiration, suspended by fear, every one was on foot. The First Consul was already in the corridor, in his dressing-gown, holding a taper, and crying with his powerful and sonorous voice, "Do not be frightened, there is nothing the matter."

He was as calm as if his sleep had not been disturbed: this I can answer for, because, by a singularity inexplicable to myself, my whole attention was occupied in examining his countenance; he was tranquil without indifference, but he was evidently a thousand cubits above the apprehension of any common danger. His destiny was not fulfilled, and he knew it.

The alarm arose from the carbine of one of the chasseurs having gone off in consequence of his horse stumbling on a mole-hill.

When the First Consul heard the report of his aide-de-camp he laughed, and called through a little door at the foot of the grand staircase,

"Josephine, dry your eyes; a mole has done all the mischief: no great wonder, for it is an ugly animal. As for the chasseur, two days' arrest, to teach him and his horse not to pass again over my lawn. As I suppose he has had a fine fright himself, his punishment shall not last longer. Good night, ladies; go to bed again, and sleep well." In passing by my door, he added,

"Felice notte, Signora Loulou, dolci riposo."—"Felicissimo riposo, Signor General."

CHAPTER LXVI.

Influence of the weather on the First Consul—The lord of the château—Imperious requisitions of the First Consul—The ravine and the calash—Useless tears of Madame Bonaparte—Concession of the First Consul in my favour—Bonaparte's ill-humour and irascibility—Madame Bonaparte's journey to Plombières—Madame Louis Bonaparte replacing her mother at Malmaison—Madame Bessières—*Reversis* and the *hearts*—*The fish*—The little Biévre—The court and the cage—The First Consul reading his despatches in my chamber—Five o'clock in the morning—Admirable maxims on the duties of a chief magistrate—Seeing every thing with one's own eyes, and the petition of a widow—Pretty writing and declaration—Amorous assignations turned over to the Minister of Police—Six in the morning—Visit of the next day—A gazette—Mademoiselle Abel and the Prince of Wirtemburg—The Archduke Charles—A compliment from Bonaparte—Breakfast at Butard—Night of distress—Carrying off the key and the door double-locked—New visit of the First Consul—The master-key—Embarrassing situation and cruel perplexity—Arrival of Junot at Malmaison—Monge, and the First Consul's gaiety—The game of chess with Bonaparte—Junot's mistaken suspicion—Indescribable situation—Junot asleep, and the First Consul at my door—Incredible scene—Bonaparte and myself in a calash—The lie given in form, and without any consequences—Explanation—My mother's letter shown to the First Consul—End of a painful scene, and my departure for Paris—Return of Madame Bonaparte, and visit to Malmaison—The anniversary and singular memory of the First Consul.

Air and exercise were necessary to Napoleon's existence, and the privation of them, from rain or any other cause, chafed his temper, and made him not only disagreeable but really ill, so that his humour at dinner was a pretty good index to the state of the weather. Alas! I can but too easily perceive that he sank under the double misery of a scorching sun and a compulsroy seclusion. The quintessence of barbarity was exhausted in the conduct of that monster in human shape delegated by England to St. Helena.

The First Consul was soon tired of retracing his own steps through the park at Malmaison, which was not sufficiently extensive to admit of his riding as he might have done at Morfontaine; and he often regretted not having an equally fine estate. Mademoiselle Julien decidedly refusing to sell, he sought elsewhere the means of enlarging his park; and entertained at one time the singular notion of purchas-

ing the Island Channorrier, which is very considerable, well planted, containing fine lawns, and situate in the middle of the Seine. When Josephine pointed out the impracticability of his scheme, he replied,

"At *Morfontaine*, the lakes are on the other side of the road: a subterranean passage may easily be made, and by buying all the tract between the road and the river, and planting it as an English garden, it seems to me that it might be done."

M. de Channorrier, however, refused to sell his island, and Napoleon purchased the woods of Butard, which made a delightful addition to his park; and so enchanted was he with his new acquisition, that on the second or third day afterwards he insisted on taking us all there, that Madame Bonaparte might inspect the pavilion, which he was disposed to make a rendezvous for the chase. Josephine was suffering under one of those dreadful headaches which so often tortured her, poor woman! and for which there was no other remedy than sleep.

"Come, come! go with us," said the First Consul, "the air will do you good. It is the sovereign remedy for all pains."

Madame Bonaparte dared no longer refuse; she sent for a hat and shawl; and she, Madame Lavalette, and I, mounted an open carriage. Napoleon preceded us, with Bourrienne; the aide-de-camp on duty had not been summoned for this excursion, with which the First Consul was as much delighted as a boy enjoying a holiday. He was on horseback, and sometimes galloped before us, then came back and took his wife's hand; as a child running before its mother returns to embrace her and then renews its race.

No words can describe the terrors of Madame Bonaparte in a carriage, and it is as difficult to express my own impatience, when I see a want of compassion for such weaknesses; they are troublesome, it is true, but are fruits of education, and no fault on the part of their victims, on whom they inflict a sort of martyrdom. Napoleon was not of my mind; he had no pity for his wife, and made her no concession.

As this was the first time of our going to Butard, the postilion did not know his way, and the road we followed brought us to a rivulet with banks so steep as to render the passage difficult for a carriage. The moment Madame Bonaparte descried this precipice, as she called it, she forbade him to proceed a step forwards. The pricker, knowing her fears, answered, when interrogated, that the passage might really be dangerous.

"See there!" cried she, "I will not go to Butard this way. Go and tell the First Consul that I am returning to the château, unless he

knows some other road;" and ordering the postilion to turn his horses, we retraced our way, but had not driven many yards before the First Consul rejoined us.

"What is the matter?" said he, with that expression of countenance peculiar to himself when any thing displeased him; "what is this new caprice about? Return from whence you came," added he, slightly touching the shoulders of the postilion with his hunting-whip; and, setting spurs to his horse, he galloped off again; we found him beside the fatal rivulet, examining its pretty high banks, but as he had just crossed it on horseback, every one else must pass it too.

This little scene was the model of many I have since witnessed.

"Come," said Napoleon to the little lad who drove the carriage, "a good plunge, then draw in the reins, and you are over."

Madame Bonaparte uttered a piercing shriek, to which the forest re-echoed. "You shall never keep me in the carriage. Let me out! —Bonaparte!—I entreat you in mercy!—Let me out!" Weeping and clasping her hands, she was truly an object of pity. Napoleon looked at her, but far from relenting, he shrugged his shoulders, and roughly commanded her to be silent. "It is absolute childishness; you shall pass, and in the carriage. Come, did you hear me?" said he, swearing to the postilion.

I saw it was time to interfere for myself, not without hope that the diversion might convince him of his error. I was pregnant, and unwilling to trust the life of my infant to the chances of this passage.

"General!" said I to the Consul, beckoning the pricker to come and open the door for me, "I am responsible for another life; I cannot stay here. The shock will be violent, and may not only injure but kill me," said I, smiling; "and you do not wish that, do you, General?"

"I," cried he, "do you the smallest harm! You! Alight, you are in the right, a jolt might do you much harm." And approaching the carriage, he himself assisted me to descend, for he had dismounted from his horse at the commencement of the scene. Encouraged by the kind and more than benevolent expression of his countenance, I ventured, perhaps ridiculously enough, to say, as he supported me to alight,

"And a jolt may be very injurious to Madame Bonaparte, General, for if she were as I am—"

The First Consul looked at me with an air so amusingly stupified, that, instead of jumping down, I stood on the footstep, laughing, like a young fool as I was; and all at once he responded my laugh in a

tone so shrill and clear, that it made us start. At length I jumped down, and Napoleon, who had instantly resumed his former gravity, reproved me for the imprudence of such an exertion. Then, as if fearful he had not been bitter enough in testifying his discontent towards his wife,

"Put up the footstep and let the carriage proceed," said he, with a tone which admitted of no reply. Madame Bonaparte was so pale, and suffered so acutely, that I could not avoid saying to Napoleon,

"General, you appear cruel, and yet you are not so. Madame Bonaparte is ill, she is in a fever: I conjure you, suffer her to alight!" He looked on me with an expression which made my blood curdle—

"Madame Junot, I never loved remonstrances, even when a child; ask la Signora Lætitia and Madame Permon, and consider whether I am likely to be tamed since." Then perceiving that his words, and still more his look and tone, almost frightened me, he added, "Well, come, let me help you over *this formidable stream, this frightful precipice.*"

When we had crossed, Napoleon saw that the carriage did not stir, for Josephine, crying as if her execution was preparing, entreated the postilion to stay another minute, as a condemned criminal would beg a reprieve.

"Very well, sir," said the First Consul, "do you choose to obey my orders?"

And this time it was not lightly that he applied a stroke of his whip to the postilion's back, who instantly whipping both his horses made them take the plunge, and the carriage crossed the rivulet, but with such difficulty that one of the springs was broken, and a pin loosened. Madame Bonaparte was still worse used; her whole frame was disordered with pain, fear, and rage, and conscious that such passions give an interesting expression only to young faces, she wrapped herself in a large muslin veil, and we were sensible only of her sobs till our arrival at Butard; when her husband, incensed at finding her still in tears, pulled her almost brutally out of the carriage, and dragging her to a short distance in the wood, we could hear him scolding the more angrily as he had set out prepared for a joyous excursion. It would appear that Josephine had other reproaches to make him than concerned the passage of the rivulet, for I heard Napoleon answer her,

"You are a simpleton, and if you repeat such a word, I shall say a wicked simpleton, because you do not think what you are saying. And you know that I have a mortal antipathy to all these jealousies

that have not common sense in them. You will end by putting it into my head. Come! embrace me and hold your tongue; you are ugly when you cry: I have told you so before."

Our return was melancholy, in spite of the reconciliation. Madame Bonaparte let fall a few honeyed words upon my special favour in being permitted to quit the carriage.

This leads me naturally to a circumstance which occurred the following year, and the remembrance of which has served me as an explanatory index to many mysteries which must otherwise have been as incomprehensible as the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Madame Bonaparte was gone to Plombières without her daughter, who remained behind to do the honours, and sanction our stay at Malmaison. The plays were acted every Wednesday: we had hunting-parties, and the evenings were spent in laughing and chatting. Madame Louis Bonaparte, who was just married, was the most engaging of brides as she had been of girls, and Madame Bessières formed a very agreeable addition to our select society; she was gentle and witty, sensible and good. Never did I see the First Consul so agreeable as during that fortnight; he was amiable, constantly good-humoured and joyous, amused himself with making me recite Italian verses, and then we played at *reversis*, at which we laughed incessantly.

The First Consul was sure to have all the hearts in his tricks, and when any one tried to force Quinola, not a single heart could be found in the other three hands, so that he carried off all the stakes, crying,

"I have all the fish!—all the fish! Who will buy all the fish in the house?"

At other times he played chess, and as he was not expert at the game, he had recourse to stratagem as at *reversis*. The game could never be finished because there were always found two bishops commanding either the white or the black squares. He was the first to laugh at these contrivances, but was annoyed if they were too seriously noticed; and as he never played for money, they were a subject of joke rather than for resentment. Thus we led a merry life, and the summer slipped pleasantly away; yet some of us wished to return home. I was particularly desirous at once to try the effect of a lady of the château, aged seventeen, and to see my husband's recent gift to me, the produce of his wedding portion from the First Consul; this was the estate of the little Biévre. I wished also to visit my mother and friends, whom I had not seen for some months; but we were obliged to surrender our projects; we had not even the possibility of

going to Ruelle, for our carriages and horses were at Paris; we saw our husbands, to be sure, every day, and might have returned with them, for it must not be supposed that we were prisoners; yet the Consular court was already a cage, the bars of which were indeed veiled with flowers, nevertheless it was a cage. Eventually, the flowers became more scarce, but the bars were gilt.

One morning I was in a profound sleep, when suddenly I was awoke by a slight noise near me, and perceived the First Consul beside my bed; thinking myself in a dream, I rubbed my eyes, which produced a laugh from him.

"It is really I," said he; "why so astonished?"

One minute had sufficed to wake me entirely, and by way of answer, I extended my hand smiling towards the open window, which the extreme heat had obliged me to leave open. The sky was still of that deep-blue which succeeds the first hour of dawn. The sombre green of the trees showed that the sun was scarcely risen. I looked at my watch, and found it was not yet five o'clock.

"Really!" said he, when I showed it to him, "no later than that? so much the better, we are going to chat," and taking an arm-chair, he placed it at the foot of my bed, seated himself, crossed his legs, and established himself there as he used to do, five years earlier, in my mother's easy-chair at the Hôtel de la Tranquillité. He held in his hand a thick packet of letters, on which was written in large characters, "For the First Consul, for himself; for him alone, personally:" in short, every form of secrecy and security was adopted, and successfully, for the First Consul reserved for himself alone the letters subscribed with those words; and when I told him that such an employment must be troublesome to him, and he should refer it to some confidential person, he answered me, "By and by, perhaps; at present it is impossible. I must answer all. At the commencement of the return of order I must not be ignorant of any want, any complaint." These are his own words.

"But," said I, pointing to a large letter, which by its bad writing, and the awkward position of the seal, showed that its author was not much accustomed to epistolary labours, "this letter probably contains only a request which might have been made through the intervention of a secretary?" Napoleon opened the letter, and read from one end to the other, three long pages, filled with very indifferent writing. When he had finished he said to me: "Well, this letter itself proves that I do right in seeing with my own eyes. Here, read it."

It was from a woman whose son had been killed in Egypt. She

was the widow of a soldier who died in the service, and having no means of subsistence, she had written, she said, more than ten letters to the Minister of War, the First Consul and his Secretary, and had received no answer.

"You see it is necessary I should myself see all that is especially recommended to my attention?" And he rose to fetch a pen from a table, made a sort of mark, probably agreed upon between Bourrienne and himself, and again sat down as if in his cabinet.—"Ah! here is a trap," said he, taking off one, two, three, four envelopes, each highly scented with essence of roses, and inscribed in a pretty handwriting, with the talismanic words, *for the First Consul only*. He came at length to the last envelope, and a laugh soon burst from him, of which I, who knew the rareness of such hilarity, expected no common explanation.

"It is a declaration," said he, "not of war, but of love. It is a beautiful lady, who has loved me, she says, from the day she beheld me present the treaty of Campo Formio to the Directory. And if I wish to see her, I have only to give orders to the sentinel at the iron gate, on the side of Bougival, to let a woman pass dressed in white, and giving the word *Napoleon!* and that (looking at the date), faith! this very evening."

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried I, "you will not be so imprudent?" He looked attentively at me; then said, "What is it to you if I do? What harm can it do me?"

"What is it to me! What harm can it do you! Really, General, those are strange questions. May not this woman be bribed by your enemies? The snare you will say is too palpable. For all that it may be perilous; and you ask me what does your imprudence signify to me!"

Napoleon looked at me again, and then began to laugh: "I said it in joke; do you think me so simple, so stupid, as to nibble at such a bait? I am receiving such letters every day, with meetings appointed sometimes at the Tuileries, sometimes at the Luxembourg, but the only answer I make to such worthy missives is that which they deserve;" and stepping again towards the table, he wrote a few words, referring it to the Minister of Police.

"The deuce, there is six o'clock!" he exclaimed, hearing a timepiece strike, and approaching the bed, he collected his papers, pinched my foot through the bed-clothes, and smiling with the graciousness which sometimes brightened his countenance, he went away singing, with that squalling voice so strongly contrasted with the fine sonorous accent of his speech—

"Non, non, *s'il* est impossible
D'avoir un plus aimable enfant.
Un plus aimable? Ah! si vraiment," etc.*

It was his favourite air. Madame Dugazon, in the character of Camilla, must have made a great impression on him, for this was the only song he repeated; but, from the first day of singing it, he said *z'il est impossible* (the *z* being superfluous). Junot, who heard him say it at Toulon, could never cure him of the habit; he never sang this song, however, unless in excellent humour. I thought no more of this visit; and neither I nor my waiting-maid took any notice of the quantity of envelopes he had left on the ground.

About nine in the evening the First Consul drew near me, and whispered, "I am going to the Bougival Gate."—"I do not believe a word of it," said I, in the same tone. "You know too well the irreparable loss to France should any evil befall you. If you say another such word I will tell Madame Hortense, or Junot."

"You are a little simpleton," said he, pinching my ear; then threatening me with his finger, "If you think of telling one word of what I have said to you, I shall not only be displeased but pained."—"The last consideration would suffice, General."—He gazed at me: "The mother's head, the mother's head, absolutely!"—I made no answer; and, perceiving that I kept silence, after waiting some minutes, he passed to the billiard-room.

The following morning I was again awakened in surprise by the same knock at my maid's chamber-door, and the First Consul entered, as before, with a packet of letters and papers in his hand. He again begged my pardon for waking me three hours too early, but added,

"Why do you sleep with your window open? It is fatal for women who, like you, have teeth of pearl. You must not risk the loss of your teeth; they resemble your mother's, and are real little pearls." And he began to read the journals, making marks under several lines with his nails. He sometimes shrugged his shoulders, and muttered a few words, which I did not hear. He was reading, I think, a foreign gazette, written in French; from a question he put to me, I think his subject was the Prince of Wirtemberg, eldest son of the Duke and now King of Wirtemberg. This young Prince had been found in Paris, almost in disguise, with a young lady of good birth, whom he had not run away with, but seduced. The Duke, it

* "No, no, it is impossible
To have a more amiable child.
A more amiable? Ah! if truly," &c.

appears, was not easily gained, and Mademoiselle Abel could not obtain the only reparation which can be offered to a credulous girl. Junot had been concerned in finding the young people. Having no interest in the story, I had but a confused knowledge of it, but what I heard was not to the credit of the young Prince. His countrymen, it appears, did not judge more favourably, for the article was vehement.

"Have you seen this young lady?" asked the First Consul. I replied in the negative.—"Ah! I remember, when I wished Junot to take her home, that you might take charge of her, he leaped several feet high. And the young Duke?" said he. I had not seen him either, or did not remember to have met him, and was quite unacquainted with his person. "He is one of those young fools, who think themselves privileged in all things *because they are Princes*," said the First Consul; "he has behaved ill in this affair, and the father of the girl, being known as a diplomatist, should have insisted more strongly on the reparation." Then striking the journal with the back of his hand: "Here is a man who will never incur a syllable of reproach! the Archduke Charles. That man has a soul of the heroic ages, a heart of the golden times. He is a virtuous man; and that word includes every thing, when spoken of a Prince."

Napoleon had certainly at this period ideas of sovereign ambition, at least I thought so; but I also believe that the fire which still at intervals sparkled from his soul in a republican idea was real: it was a dwindling flame, but would certainly have still burned on, if the members of the state had themselves defended the liberty of the Republic.

After running through some journals and letters, the First Consul again pinched my foot through the bed-clothes, and descended to his cabinet, muttering a few false notes. I called my waiting-woman, who had not been long in my service, and without explanation prohibited her ever opening the door to any one who might knock so early in the morning.—"But, Madam, if it be the First Consul?"—"I will not be awakened so early by the First Consul, or any one else. Do as I bid you."

The day resembled others, except that in the evening we took an airing towards Butard. As we passed near the spot which had so alarmed Madame Bonaparte, the First Consul praised my courage.

"Nay," said I, "I think I was rather cowardly to alight."—"That was a precaution for your situation, and does you credit; I saw, nevertheless, that you had no fear."

Perhaps it never happened to Napoleon to pay so long a compli-

ment twice in his life, and it so surprised me that I could not answer; but it reached other ears than mine, and the surprise was not for me alone.—"I should like to give you a breakfast here the day after to-morrow," said the First Consul, when we were in the Pavilion; "we will have a little hunting before and after; it will do me good, and amuse us all. The day after to-morrow, Tuesday, I give you all the rendezvous here, at ten."

Entering my apartment, I gave my orders to the waiting-maid, and went to bed much wearied, without knowing why. I was low; I wished to see my friends; that home so happy, so animated, the charm of my life, I had it not at Malmaison. I was treated with kindness, but I lived amongst strangers. Besides, I scarcely saw my husband, and that conjugal home which the lapse of time perpetually robs of some portion of its warmth, till reason and friendship replace for ever the bright days of love, this home was, with Junot and I, in all its spring of happiness. I knew I was necessary to my husband, and was yet too young to guess that this necessity would not be eternal. I spent the night in tears; I would have given years of my life —that life, yet in its morning, and whose day promised such beauty and brilliancy, to the familiar spirit who would have transported me to the side of my mother and husband. At length I fell asleep, like children when their eyes are fatigued with weeping. But my sleep was agitated, and the first light of morning scarcely penetrated my Venetian blinds, before I awoke, fancying I had heard a noise near my door; but, on listening, I heard nothing. Suddenly it occurred to me, that I ought to take the key, for my maid would certainly not dare to refuse the First Consul, and I was determined these morning visits should not be repeated. I saw no harm in them, but knew enough of the world to avoid the construction that might be put upon them. I rose, therefore, very gently, and crossing my maid's room, was not a little surprised to find the door as unsecured as when we went to bed; the key was outside, and the bolt unfastened. For a moment I was enraged, but, refraining myself, gently opened the door, withdrew the key, double-turned the lock, and carrying the key with me, returned to my bed, without the power of sleeping; my watch was at hand, and I followed the motion of the hand, till, as it pointed to six, I heard the First Consul's foot in the corridor. He stopped at the door and knocked, but much less loudly than the preceding days. After waiting a moment he knocked again, and this time awoke my maid, who told him I had taken the key. He made no answer, and went away.

When the sound of his steps died away on the stairs leading to

his cabinet, I respired as if a heavy burden was removed from my chest, and fell again into tears. I looked on the First Consul as a brother, or perhaps rather as a father, since my sentiments towards him were always founded on a deep admiration. He was the protector and support of my husband; and Junot himself had the tenderest affection for him: in what light would he view this gross distrust which deprived him of a moment's distraction in conversing with a child he had known from her birth! But having taken my resolution, I became more tranquil; and desiring my maid to shut the door from her room, I was again in a sound sleep, when the door opened violently, and I saw the First Consul.

"Are you afraid of being assassinated, then?" said he, with a sharpness that relieved me of all fear; for when any attempt is made to curb me I grow restive, and he might read in my countenance that I was more offended than repentant. I told him, that having risen very early, I had taken the key out of my maid's room, choosing my chamber to be entered only by my own door. Napoleon fixed on me his eyes of the falcon and eagle together, and made no reply: a foolish timidity prevented my telling him my resolution; and I bitterly repented it.

"To-morrow is the hunting-party at Butard," said he; "you have not forgotten it since last night, have you? We set out early; and that you may be ready, I shall come myself to wake you; and as you are not amongst a horde of Tartars, do not barricade yourself again as you have done. You see that your precaution against an old friend has not prevented his reaching you. Adieu!" and away he went; but this time without singing. I looked at my watch, and found it nine o'clock, which distracted me; for at that hour all the chambermaids were about in the house, and it was impossible but some of them must have seen him go in or out. "But how did he get in?" I asked myself.

I called Mademoiselle Caroline, and asked her why she had departed from my orders. She told me that the First Consul had opened the door with a master key; and that she dared not hinder his entering my room.

Hereupon I reflected on the course I should pursue. My first suggestion was to demand a carriage of Madame Louis Bonaparte; but what reason could I assign? Ten years later I should have gone to the stables, and ordered a carriage; but at seventeen, a timidity, not of character, but of manners, deterred me. I dressed myself therefore, and went to breakfast, with a positive determination of will, but great irresolution as to the manner of executing it. Duroc,

who would have been my adviser, my friend, and, above all, my means of acting, was absent in Lorrain; and never was I in so much need of his friendship. There was not an individual in the château whom I deemed capable of comprehending my situation. Madame Louis Bonaparte was kind, sensible, and sufficiently acquainted with the world to grant what was due to its observances; but an all-powerful consideration arrested me as I was rising to consult her. I fell back almost stunned, and uncertain what course to adopt. I was determined to return to Paris, and knew that by writing at once to Junot that I was ill and wished to return home, my carriage would arrive in the course of the next day; but it was the same day, Monday, that I resolved to go, not Tuesday, and still less Wednesday. Then again, I was unwilling to appear uncivil to Madame Louis Bonaparte, or to wound the First Consul's feelings.

"*Mon Dieu!*" I exclaimed, dropping my head on my two hands, "what can I do?" At the same moment I felt myself pressed in a gentle embrace, and a well-known voice inquired,—"What is the matter, then, my Laura?"—It was my husband; I threw myself into his arms, folded my own around him, embraced him, kissed his hair and his hands, and so eagerly caressed him, that my cheek was scratched by one of his epaulettes, and the blood flowed.—"What is the matter then?" repeated Junot, stanching the blood and drying my tears. "What is the matter, my poor little one? Look at me then: do not you know four days have elapsed since I saw you?"—"My love, I want to go away—to return to Paris."—"Oh, you may be assured that as soon as Madame Bonaparte returns I will take you with me."—"And why not now?"—"Now! before her return? nay, you do not think of it, my darling?"

I insisted no further, for my plan was now arranged. Junot, though, with all the other acting authorities, he was prohibited sleeping out of Paris, frequently visited Malmaison, sometimes after dinner, sometimes in the morning; but, in either case, departed not till we had retired for the night.

This day Junot arrived and stayed to dinner by the First Consul's desire, communicated through the aide-de-camp on duty. When we assembled in the dining-room the First Consul was in high spirits, joked all dinner-time with Monsieur Monge, and made him explain more than ten times over the nature of trade-winds, with which he was himself perfectly well acquainted; but the worthy man had so singular a mode of arranging his hands when speaking, and of running post in his narrative, that he was very amusing, and would have been ridiculous, had he not united the most excellent heart with his great

knowledge. After dinner, billiards were introduced as usual; I played a game of chess with the First Consul; and at the usual hour we all separated, some to their rest, and others to return to Paris. I prevented Junot's accompanying Bessières, by telling him I had a commission to give him for my mother; and, as I must write, it would be necessary to return to my chamber.

When there, my earnest and persevering supplications that Junot would carry me home with him, inspired him at last with the idea that some one had offended me, and his unbounded rage and resentment against the supposed defaulter absolutely terrified me; but, reassured on this head, no arguments, no entreaties could prevail with him "to carry me off," as he said, "in the night, like a heroine of romance." I am now sensible that he could not sanction so ridiculous an act, but I was then very young. Our discussion had been very long, and at half after twelve, finding Junot resolute, there remained no other expedient than that of persuading him to stay. Here I was much more strongly armed, and after some resistance he said with a smile, "Happily, there are no longer arrests to fear, but you will procure me a scolding;" and he remained.

I double-locked my maid's door, carefully drew the bolts, and took away the key; my own door I left simply shut, with the key outside, and all this disposed, I went to bed, very foolishly convinced that I had adopted the best means of making the First Consul understand, that, since he was pleased to honour me with his visits, I should prefer any other hour for receiving them, to that which he had chosen.

As the village clock was striking five, I awoke; all was quiet in the château, as in the middle of the night.—The weather was beautifully serene, and the fine foliage of the park plantations gently undulated in the wind, while a golden ray already tinted the upper branches. All this silence and repose formed so striking a contrast with my own mental uneasiness, that I could not avoid starting when my eye fell on Junot sleeping by my side. His sleep was tranquil; yet was there something at once imposing and picturesque in that fine and manly figure, that countenance embrowned by the suns of Africa, that youthful forehead already ploughed with scars, those marked features, and that fair head encircled with a Turkish turban of red and brown, which had accidentally fallen in his way overnight, and been adopted as a nightcap. He was not strikingly handsome, but it could not be denied that he was good-looking.

The half hour had just struck when I heard the First Consul's steps resound in our corridor. My heart beat violently; I could

have wished Junot at Paris, or concealed; but at that moment a sleeping movement partly opened his shirt, and displayed two wounds received at the battle of Castiglione; a little farther, just below the heart, was that given him by Lanusse, when in defence of his beloved General he drew his sword against a brave brother-in-arms.—"Ah!" thought I, "I fear nothing: there is an impenetrable buckler," and resting my head on my pillow, I awaited the event.—The door opened noisily.—"What! still asleep, Madame Junot, on a hunting-day! I told you that——"—The First Consul as he spoke advanced, and now stood at the foot of the bed, where, drawing aside the curtain, he stood motionless at the sight of his faithful and devoted friend. I am almost sure he at first believed it a vision. Junot, on the other hand, scarcely awake, leaning on one elbow, looked at the First Consul with an air of astonishment that would have diverted a less interested spectator; but his countenance expressed no symptoms of displeasure.

"Why, General! what are you doing in a lady's chamber at this hour?" He uttered these words in a tone of perfect good-humour.—"I came to awake Madame Junot for the chase," replied the First Consul, in the same tone; "but," after a prolonged glance at me, which is still present to my memory notwithstanding the thirty years that have since intervened, "but I find her provided with an alarum still earlier than myself. I might scold, for you are contraband here, M. Junot."—"My General," said Junot, "if ever a fault deserved pardon, it is mine. Had you seen that little syren last night exercising all her magic for more than an hour to seduce me, I think you would pardon me."

The First Consul smiled, but his smile was evidently forced.—"I absolve you then entirely. It is Madame Junot that shall be punished," and he laughed that laugh *which laughs not.* "To prove that I am not angry, I permit you to accompany us to the chase. Have you a horse?"—"No, General, I came in a carriage."—"Well! Jardin shall find you one, and I allow you to lecture me at your leisure" (because he was a bad huntsman). "Adieu, Madame Junot; come, get up, and be diligent," and he left us.

"Faith!" said Junot jumping up in his bed, "*that is an admirable man!* What goodness! Instead of scolding, instead of sending me sneaking back to my duty in Paris! Confess, my Laura, that he is not only an astonishing being, but above the sphere of human nature."

When we were all ready and assembled on the stone bridge in the garden, several carriages and saddle-horses were brought. A

small phæton led the way; the First Consul seated himself in it, and beckoning to me said, "Madame Junot, will you honour me with your company?"

These words were accompanied with a smile, whose expression did not please me. I got in without reply; the door was shut, and the little light carriage, inclining to the right, followed an alley that led to one of the iron gates of the park. I knew the First Consul would only remain in the carriage from the château to the rendezvous, where he was to mount his horse; but the drive appeared to me very long, and I would have given any thing to escape from my confinement.

When we were at some distance from the château, the First Consul, who till then had been watching the horsemen as they passed us to go to the rendezvous, turned towards me, and crossing his arms, said, "You think yourself very clever."—I made no reply, and he repeated—"You think yourself very clever; do you not?"

As his tone was now positively interrogative, I answered with firmness, "I do not give myself credit for extraordinary sense, but I think I am not a simpleton."—"A simpleton, no; but a fool." I was silent. "Can you explain the reason why you made your husband stay?"—"The explanation is clear and brief, General. I love Junot; we are married, and I thought there was no scandal in a husband remaining with his wife."—"You knew I had prohibited it, and you knew, too, that my orders ought to be obeyed."

"They do not concern me. When the Consuls signify their will as to the degree of intimacy that shall subsist between a married couple, and the number of days and hours that should be allotted to their interviews, then I shall think of submitting; till then, I confess, General, my good pleasure shall be my only law."

Here I was growing uncivil, for I was angry, and probably my manner put him out of humour too, for he resumed with asperity, and a sort of irony:—"You had no other reason, then, but love for your husband in making him stay?"—"No, General."—"You have told a lie there."—"General—"—"Yes, you have told a lie," repeated he, in an irritated tone; "I understand the motive of your proceeding. You have a distrust of me, which you ought not to have. Ah! you have no answer," said he, in a tone of triumph.

"And if I have been impelled by a different motive from the distrust you speak of, General—if I have perceived that your visit at such an hour in the chamber of a young woman of my age might compromise me strangely in the eyes of the other inhabitants of this house?" I shall never forget Napoleon's expression of countenance at

this moment; it displayed a rapid succession of sentiments, none of them evil.

"If that be true," said he at last, "why did you not tell me your uneasiness? Have I not shown you friendship enough, naughty child, within the last week to obtain your confidence!"

"There I was perhaps in fault. I should have considered that you had known me a child, General; that my relations love you; that you were once tenderly attached to my mother (he looked on the other side of the road); and, above all, that there was another and a stronger reason which should have encouraged me to tell you what I thought of this visit on the second or the third day: this is, that I am the wife of Junot—of the man who loves you best in the world. This morning when I heard your step when you were about to enter my chamber, I confess I had some fear of your resentment; but looking at those scars received partly for your glory, I assured myself that you would never be the cause of suffering to the noble and excellent heart which beats, perhaps, more strongly for you than for me, in the mutilated breast of Junot."

"You are reading me almost a homily. Who talks of afflicting Junot? Why not have spoken to me?"—"And how was I to do so! When yesterday morning you employed a method that might be called unworthy, to enter my apartment, after my conduct should have shown you, General, that the morning visit which you had the goodness to make me was viewed by me in its true light, as unbecoming; you entered only for a minute, and in a humour certainly not inviting confidence. I was left then to my own resources, and my judgment has perhaps erred."

"Is there none of your mother's advice in all this?"—"My mother, General! how could my mother direct me? My poor mother! I have not seen her this month."—"You can write;" and Napoleon's searching glance seemed to surround me with its scrutiny. —"General, I have not written to my mother that I was not in safety under your roof; it would have given her too much pain."

"Madame Junot, you have known me long enough to be assured that you will not obtain the continuance of my friendship by speaking in the manner you are now doing; there is nothing wanting to your proceedings but that you should have communicated to Junot the device you have so happily imagined." And again I met the same investigating look.

"I shall not reply to that challenge, General," replied I, with impatience I could not disguise; "if you grant me neither sense nor judgment, allow me at least a heart that would not wantonly wound

one whom I know, and whom you know also."—"Again!" and he struck the frame of the carriage with his clenched fist: "again!—hold your tongue!"

"No, General, I shall not; I shall continue what I would have the honour of saying to you. I entreat you to believe that neither my mother, my husband, nor any one of my friends, has been informed of what has passed within the last week. I must add, that imputing no ill intentions to you, it would have been absurd on my part to complain of a mark of friendship, because it might compromise me: but I thought proper to put a stop to it at whatever price; and, in so doing, my youth has no doubt led me into error, since I have displeased you. I am sorry for it; but that is all I can say."

We had nearly arrived; the dogs, the horns, all the clamour of the chase was audible. The First Consul's countenance assumed a less sombre hue than it had worn during my long speech. "And you give me your word of honour that Junot knows nothing of all this foolish affair."—"Good Heaven! General, how can you conceive such an idea, knowing Junot as you do? He is an Othello in the violence of his passions; an African in heat of blood; his feeble French reason would not have had strength enough to judge sanely of all this; and—" I stopped.—"Well! what then? Come, do not make these pauses in speaking; nothing is more silly."—"Well, General, if I had told Junot what has passed this week, neither he nor I would have been here this morning; you know Junot well enough for that, do you not?"

Napoleon, in his turn, made no answer; but played with his fingers on the frame of the carriage: at last, turning towards me:—"You will not believe, then, that I meant you no harm?"—"On the contrary, General, I am so convinced that you had no ill intention towards me, that I can assure you neither my attachment for you, an attachment dating from infancy, nor the admiration which I feel even more strongly than others, is at all lessened by it: and there is my hand as the pledge of my words."

I cannot express or explain the movement of his forehead, his look, and half-smile, as gently shaking his head, he refused my hand. I was hurt at the refusal.

"We are at variance, then," said I, "because it has pleased you to follow a course in which all the blame is on your side, and you will *let the beard grow, and wear the dagger*,* because you have given me pain."

* These are the customs of Corsica, when any one is offended, or fancies himself offended, who thereby announces himself as an avenger.

For a minute his eyes were fixed on the road; then turning suddenly to me, he extended his little hand, after having ungloved it: "Be assured of my friendship, Madame Junot; you might, had you chosen, have strengthened it; but early education is not easily eradicated. It inculcates sentiments, and those with which you have been inspired for me are not friendly: you do not like me, and I am sure—"

"I take the liberty of interrupting you, General, to request that you will not talk thus. You afflict me; and so much the more as your arguments and inferences are both false. Tell me that you do not believe them; it would be too painful to me to leave you in such a persuasion."

The First Consul was looking at the dogs which the pricker was leading in couples, and he turned so suddenly round as to derange the motion of the carriage.—"You are going?"—"On our return from the hunt, General, I have induced Junot to take me home, and here is a letter that, as you will perceive, would have determined me, independently of the incidents of the last few days, (I said this with a smile) to go to my mother."

It was from my mother, urging my return to her, and I had received it while dressing that morning.—"If the First Consul, or Madame Louis Bonaparte, should raise difficulties," added she, "show them my letter, and beg they will not detain a daughter from her very sick mother."

The First Consul casting his eyes over it, shrugged up his shoulders, and smiled with a sort of disdain which pained me.—"And when do you return here?" asked he with a tone of derision that might have offended a person better disposed than I was, and accordingly I answered with asperity:—"Whenever I am wanted, for my part, General; but you may dispose of my apartment, I shall never again occupy it."

"As you will. For the rest, you are right to go this morning; after all this foolish affair, you and I should not meet with much satisfaction at present. You are quite right. Jardin! my horse." And opening the door himself, he jumped out of the carriage, mounted his horse, and galloped off.

On our return to the château, I told Madame Louis that my mother's health imperiously demanded my presence in Paris, and that I intended to return with Junot. She understood me, and I even believe she entirely understood my motives. She wished to detain me to dinner, but Junot's absence the preceding night required an

earlier return, and, declining the invitation, we dined at Paris with my mother.

I visited Malmaison some time after Madame Bonaparte's return from Plombières, where she had passed the season, that is to say, six weeks. The First Consul was tolerably cordial, but I could perceive that he still cherished the notion, equally eccentric and injurious, that I had been prompted in all that had passed during the last week of my stay. It gave me pain; but knowing no human means of defeating this prepossession, I left the task to time,* without changing the line of conduct I had marked out for myself.

A year afterwards I dined one day at Malmaison, while residing at Bièvre; satisfied with my charming home, I left it as little as possible, and always returned the same evening. That day I ordered my carriage at ten, but as I was preparing for departure, a sudden storm came on of such terrific violence as to break the trees in the park. Madame Bonaparte protested against allowing me to go through such a tempest, and said that *my chamber* should be prepared. In answer to my persevering excuses, she promised me both linen and a waiting-maid, and urged the danger of crossing the woods at so late an hour.—"I fear nothing, Madam," I answered, "I have four men with me. Permit me then to take leave of you."

The First Consul was occupied, meanwhile, in pulling the fire about with the tongs, and apparently paying no attention to the conversation, though I could perceive a smile on his countenance. At last, as Madame Bonaparte insisted still more strongly on my staying, he said from his place, without resigning the tongs or turning his head: "Torment her no more, Josephine; I know her, she will not stay."

* I know to a certainty, that, at this time, *false reports* envenomed all the words of my mother to the First Consul's ears, and I am nearly sure that this story came to the knowledge of persons who would make a pernicious use of it towards us both. The First Consul long retained a rancor, which he certainly would not have felt had it not been both instilled and carefully nourished.

CHAPTER LXVII.

The new era—The manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick—The two years of Bonaparte's government—Paris in 1801—The theatres—My boxes—The first representation of Pinto—M. Carion de Nisas, and the death of Montmorency—Vanhove and Louis XIII.'s snuff-box—Tortures of the inquisition—Partiality for the Theatre Feydeau, and the performances of Ellevion—The Italian Opera—The Duke de Mouchi's duets with Junot—Cimarosa—The *Théâtre Montansier*—The masquerade, a comic scene—The return of spring and removal to Malmaison.

We have now reached an age of prodigies, perhaps even more astonishing than the victories which followed the period I am about to describe. France, which a few months preceding had been at war with all Europe, repulsed by her sister nations from the family circle in which she had hitherto so nobly filled the place of an elder, France, in a few months, had recovered her power and station. She resumed the rank of which they had endeavoured to deprive her, and owed it solely to her sons. France, that inexhaustible mine of talents and courage, within the soil of which the pestiferous breath of false doctrines had failed to destroy the seeds of all good, flourished anew under the cares of a skilful and honourable government. The time no longer existed when senseless enemies, dreaming at once over her weakness and divisions, issued manifestoes *menacing with death every Frenchman who dared to defend himself.**

France no longer feared the fate of that unhappy Poland, whose blood-stained provinces had been divided with an unanimity of tyranny which would doubtless have presided also over the division of France, if the man, whom the voice of destiny recalled from the African shores to save us, had in his perilous voyage encountered captivity or death. Scarce had he touched our soil when Bonaparte seized the helm of the sinking vessel; commanding the manœuvres with the powerful voice of genius, he compelled the obedience of the crew; the vessel sails under his ensigns, and we are saved. What he effected in two years cannot be conceived! At that moment peace was about to be concluded with two great powers of the North, la Vendée was

* See the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick, of the 25th of July, 1792.

pacified, the finances, so lately in the last stage of decline, had resumed an active credit, every thing assumed an aspect of consolidation, and our strength grew out of our glory; all this proves the greatness of the government under which we placed ourselves two years ago. Our haughty rival will shortly come to conclude a peace with us; already the King of England, as a first step towards a conciliation, renounces his titles of King of France and King of Corsica.* The world is asking peace, and Napoleon grants it with the same generous grandeur with which he conquers. From this period the greatness of France must advance, we are rapidly marching towards that famous era, before which past centuries bow down, and future centuries recede; for they cannot equal it.

But these days of glory were short!—True—they were short; but in glory, as in love, an entire life may be condensed into a short moment.

While Moreau beat the Austrians at all points in Germany, while the imperial family, alarmed at his progress, packed up its treasures at Vienna and prepared to take refuge in Moravia, while Brune defeated Marshal Bellegarde in Italy, compelled Verona to capitulate, and developed all the qualities of a great general, the First Consul exhibited such lively and hearty joy in receiving the news of all these victories, that it became manifest he would sooner or later give to France the first rank on the list of nations.

But my concern is with the state of Paris at this epoch; and I will attempt to represent it—city of enchantments, as it then was! One of the advantages attached to Junot's situation was a box at each of the theatres. I confess I was truly grateful for the gratification I thus enjoyed. It afforded me also the means of bestowing pleasure, which was always to me one of the greatest I could enjoy, and in good truth it was not sparingly accorded to me. Tickets for morning and evening representations were eagerly asked, and I received, at a much later period, no less than eleven requisitions for the loan of my box, at the *Comédie Française*, for the second representation of "The Templars." I had opportunities of being generous seven or eight times a day: I accorded them, in the belief that so doing, I should secure, if not real friends, at least a sort of amicable relation with my numerous acquaintances which might survive the obligation. I was young when these reveries occupied my mind.

I now went frequently to the theatre; a pleasure with which I had

* It was at the period when Paoli called the English into Corsica, that the King of England assumed the title above alluded to.

hitherto been so little acquainted that I had visited the Opera but once and the French comedy three times; at the first representation of *Pinto*, the most glorious of disturbances past, present, or to come—that of *Montmorency* by *Carion de Nisas*, and the *début* of Lafont, which was so stormy, that I verily thought the theatre of the French comedy must have been built with unusual strength to resist such attacks.

Pinto, fine as is the subject of the Braganza conspiracy, of which Lemercier was fully capable of taking the utmost advantage, did not suit the taste of that era of clipping scissors and decisive words, which demanded:—"Take away that phrase."—"Why?"—"Because I do not choose that it should stand there."—"What is the objection to it?"—"I will not allow it."—"But surely there is some reason against it—is it unsuitable?"—"Not at all; but no matter, it must be removed."

In speaking of my mother's acquaintances, I was in error in omitting the most witty, perhaps, of the circle, M. Carion de Nisas. I know few minds of more various powers, more agreeable, gay and inoffensive, and withal more *piquant;* but notwithstanding his great dramatic talent he was unfortunate in his theatrical productions. I shall never forget the state of mind he was in at the first representation of *the Death of Montmorency*, which I believe killed him more effectually than the *connètable* was killed, and that owing to circumstances altogether foreign to his work.

The tragedy contained some fine verses and interesting situations; the cardinal's political views, and the entire scene in which he develops his plans for the aggrandizement of France, are strikingly beautiful, and the inconsistencies of the piece might have passed unperceived if it had been performed with less incongruity; but its misfortune was complete. Talma, who played Montmorency, was the only one of the *corps dramatique* that seemed to possess common sense. Baptiste, the elder, Madame Petit-Vanhove, and more especially Vanhove, the father, were all out of their element. But Vanhove was admirably placed for producing laughter, which completed the despair of M. de Nisas. It is well known, or perhaps so happy an incident may have escaped the public memory, that Vanhove, the elder, had the trifling habit of getting tipsy, not to say actually drunk, on the night of a first representation especially. As he was a wretched performer habitually, it might be hoped that wine would produce a happy effect upon him; but not at all, he was so much the worse. The day of the first representation of the Death of Montmorency, notwithstanding the most careful supervision of his

daughter and Talma, who was his son-in-law *in petto*, he drank a little to give him courage as he said; but by the evening, when it was necessary to assume something of a royal air, his spirit was found mounted a little degree beyond courage. Although the habit of taking snuff is by no means charged on Louis XIII., the great personage he was destined to represent, there was no such thing as persuading him to give up a round case containing a pound of snuff which he called his snuff-box. His daughter, already dressed for the part of Anne of Austria, used every possible argument to prevent his appearing upon the stage with this bale of contraband goods. He was thoroughly tipsy, and had taken up a phrase from which there was no driving him.

"Prove to me that Louis XIII. did not take snuff, and I will lay down my arms: prove it to me."—"But, my father," . . . . . said Madame Petit-Vanhove.—"Prove to me that Louis XIII. did not take snuff."

And he so stuffed his unfortunate nose that it was scarcely possible to hear his voice, while the fumes of the snuff still increased his drunkenness; and so completely did he parody some of his part, that laughter prevailed over both hisses and applauses. M. de Nisas came occasionally to our box, which enabled me to make some judgment of a torment of which I should otherwise have had no conception. At one period he was ready to expire, pale, with suspended respiration, and his forehead steeped in perspiration; in fact, it was impossible to laugh—that would have killed him outright. He looked without seeing, and seemed to have but one sense in which all the others were sunk. What a terrible punishment. I cannot imagine how any one can voluntarily submit to such torture! I think I should be more at my ease in the water-trench of the holy tribunal.*

Setting aside the partiality of friendship, it contained some fine passages; amongst others, I remember the following which was given with much effect. Montmorency, condemned to death, is about to be rescued by the soldiers and the people; his sister, his wife, and the Queen who loves him, are listening with the utmost anxiety to the

* In the prisons of the inquisition in Spain three kinds of torture were in use, of which that by water was the most agonising. The patient extended in a kind of trench or coffin open at the feet and at the head, his face was covered with a wet cloth, on which water was thrown, intended to filter drop by drop into the throat, and as the nose and mouth could not breathe through this cloth, which intercepted at once the air and water, the result was that on removing it, the cloth and throat were found full of blood, from the small vessels which had burst.

issue of the attempt; the Cardinal is relating it, and concludes with these words:—"In reply to the mutineers, I threw them his head."

The situation at this instant is admirable, and reminds one of Iphigenia. The piece however failed, and failed utterly, which proves that a man of genius may write a bad tragedy; and I fear this happens not unfrequently.

The Feydeau was one of the theatres at which I passed my evenings with the greatest pleasure; it boasted at that time a degree of perfection which it has never recovered. It possessed several admirable performers, and the chief among them was Elleviou,—a treasure, not only for his own excellence, but because the other actors in performing with him were emulous of rising to his height; its orchestra was complete, and its charming pieces were played with perfection.

The charm which our native music, gay, brilliant, and expressive, has for our French ears, added to the great pleasure in the Italian Opera, which was established at Paris in the year 1801. The company occupied at first a small theatre, called the Olympic Saloon, in the Rue Chantereine. This theatre, not much larger than a saloon for private representations, drew together the best society of Paris. Its open boxes, between high pillars, required full dress, an obligation sufficiently agreeable to ladies; and I remember to have seen the first tier of boxes entirely occupied by very elegantly-dressed women, almost all young; and, what was still more remarkable, all of my acquaintance, except the inmates of two boxes.

My mother, who found a sovereign panacea for all her sufferings in good Italian music, never failed to take her place in my box on the night of the Opera Buffa. The Duke of Mouchi frequently accompanied her. He was then, and has ever since been, an excellent *dilettanti*. He was passionately fond of Italian music, and sung charmingly in the buffa style. I have often accompanied him and my husband in that duo of "The Clandestine Marriage," *Se fiato, etc.* Neither of them ever failed in note or measure; and the harmony of intonation and expression was perfect. The Duke had a superb voice, a full and sonorous bass-tenor, which it was delightful to hear; Junot was far behind him, and had no other merit than correctness and time. His voice was harsh, because, *to the right about face* and *by fours to the left*, will not form a supple voice, even if it has the good fortune to remain correct; and my lessons were not sufficiently vigorous to make him an accomplished musician.

The mention of the Italian opera naturally leads to a short notice of the king of harmony. Cimarosa was scarcely fifty years old at his death. He was born at Naples, and educated at the Conservatory of

Loretto, where the works of the incomparable Durante formed his chief study. He left the Conservatory young and agreeable, and, according to the then prevailing fashion amongst essaying composers, had to make choice of a house of patronage. He was acquainted with Madame Ballante, whose immense fortune gave her the means of patronizing the arts. She received the young musician, and soon found how honourable to herself would prove the protection she extended to him. Madame Ballante had a daughter, who did not listen with impunity to his ravishing notes; she loved him passionately, and the mother permitted his addresses; she died young, and, during her short marriage, a happy wife, leaving Cimarosa a son. He was in despair; his mother-in-law, Madame Ballante, had educated and adopted a young orphan, whom she bestowed on Cimarosa, saying, "My friend, she is my second daughter!" Alas! his tender heart was not destined for happiness: his second wife also died young, leaving him a son and a daughter.

Cimarosa, besides extreme goodness of heart, possessed much talent and considerable information, independently of the peculiar faculty which the torch of genius communicated to his soul. He sang in perfection, and accompanied his voice with brilliant execution. My brother, who was enchanted with his compositions, as those who have a soul for music must always be, once spent a whole morning with him in musical essays; Cimarosa at the piano, my brother accompanying with his harp. Cimarosa gave a theme, which Albert took up and varied; the author then sang it in various keys and movements, as a barcarole, canzonet, polacca, romance, etc., and this delightful contest lasted three hours. "The most agreeable hours," my brother has often observed, "which in my life I have ever passed were in this manner." He was a charming companion, gay, fond of a laugh, and possessing in the highest degree that generosity which is always inherent in an artist of true talent. How many unfortunate emigrants has not Cimarosa relieved! When at Paris, his beautiful *Finale del Matrimonio*, *Pria che spunti*, or *Quelle pupille tenere*, were applauded with rapture approaching to frenzy; it was not known that the profits of these immortal productions were devoted to the comfort of our unhappy countrymen. But he lived under a government incapable of appreciating him, and instead of a wreath in the name of the country, persecutions and chains were the reward of his humanity; persecutions, which, it is well known, hastened his end. He attempted, but in vain, to struggle against royal terrorism; more skilful than the republican, its cruelty was even more active and permanent. This, it is true, could not easily be, but the horrors committed at Naples

are not known to the public, and the eye which could penetrate amidst that multitude of assassinations, legal robberies, and religious persecutions to which Naples was, at this time, a prey, would turn aside in disgust.

Madame Ballante was equally a victim to the trouble which distracted that beautiful country; she lost all her fortune, and Cimarosa had the consolation of receiving her at his home. "You are the mistress of my house," said he; "is not every thing I possess your property? are you not my mother?" Cimarosa died on the 10th of January, 1801; his name will be as immortal as his works.

But to return to Paris. The Opera was always the admiration of Europe, but has greatly improved since the period of which I am now writing. Another theatre was at that time much frequented—the *Théâtre de Montansier*; Tiercelin, Vertepré, Brunet, and Bosquier-Gavaudan, attracted thither all the lovers of frank and hearty gaiety; its receipts exceeded those of the Opera by 14 or 15,000 francs per annum.

For some weeks I had experienced so ardent a desire to see a masquerade, that I began to feel absolutely unhappy in finding the carnival drawing to a close without having joined in this amusement, just then reintroduced by the First Consul, who had himself attended them. I determined then to ask my mother to take me to one; but my first word brought an answer that put a stop to all my hopes in that quarter. "In the first place," said she, "it wearies me beyond every thing; in the next, I do not choose that you should go to gape for four hours in a room full of dust and the odour of rancid oil."—"I gape!" cried I, "at a masked ball! which every one asserts to be the most diverting of all amusements!"—"You do not know what you are talking of," replied my mother; "but, if you are obstinate, go with your husband; your marriage is still sufficiently recent to permit you to be seen together, even if you should be recognised."

At this moment my aunt Comnéne came in. She had been some time at Paris, and while waiting the arrival of the rest of her family, lived with my mother. She was still a young woman, gay, because she was happy, and taking pleasure in every thing. She was, if possible, even more charming than she is now; at the present time all around her suffer in seeing her suffer.

As soon as she heard of my want of a *chaperone*, she offered to accompany me to the ball at the Opera, and so enchantingly, that I could not refrain from jumping up to embrace her, while I returned a thousand thanks. "It is understood then," said she, "I shall dine with you, we will mask to the teeth, and give ample provocation to many

people who will never suspect us of being at the ball to-night."

Now it is quite necessary to explain the cause of the extreme avidity with which the masked ball was attended.—This very innocent pastime, be it understood, had been suppressed from the commencement of the revolution, because it was unknown to the Romans and Athenians. Here, however, was a slight mistake; for at Rome tradition shows that if masquerades did not actually exist, there was, at least, a sufficient approach to them to authorize ours. At length, the generation which was passing away, wished to divert itself once more under a mask; and the generation which was looking up demanded cheerfulness: with one voice, then, the masquerade was called for. Two only had yet been given.

Junot laughed at my desire to go to this ball, and said the same thing as my mother: "Ah! my poor Laurette, how you will be overpowered with *ennui!*"—"Ah!" exclaimed I, scarce able to restrain my tears, "you are all leagued against my pleasure; why should I be wearied, where every one else is amused?"

"Let them say on, niece, we will be amused too; and, at two o'clock in the morning, your husband shall see whether you are wearied, and repent of his impertinence."—"Agreed," cried Junot, "I wish for nothing better; we shall see."

We dined very gaily, and passed a delightful evening; my aunt was always communicative, open, sincere, and possessed excellent spirits. My delight, however, was very great when midnight arrived; I summoned my maid, and my aunt and I were ready in an instant. While I was looking in the glass to see how my domino became me, I started and gave a piercing cry on perceiving behind me a great black phantom, with large brilliant eyes and a negro face.

"Oh heavens, how you frightened me!" I exclaimed, while Junot embraced me, laughing heartily.—"Oh! oh! is this your courage? how will you bear then to find yourself amongst two thousand such masks?"—I looked at him, and was still frightened, his great black figure was any thing but agreeable.—"But why have you made yourself such an object?"—"Why? was it not agreed that I should give an arm to you and my aunt?"—"What of that?"—"What of that? would you have me promenade the Saloon of the Opera with my face uncovered? a pretty concern we should make of this masked ball! No, I devote myself for your pleasure to night; let us take our masks and be gone."

I did not wait a second order: but the horses went too slowly to please me; I thought we should never reach this much desired Opera-house. At length we entered as the clock struck one, Junot giving

us each an arm. On first stepping into the room and casting my eyes round me, the effect of the novel and strange scene upon me was like that of walking the deck of a ship. My head was giddy; I grasped Junot's arm with all my strength; my aunt made me sit down. This indisposition was the effect of the sudden light and excessive heat; the degree in the room was at least 100.

When I had recovered myself, "Now," said Junot, "how do you propose to proceed? You are to amuse yourself according to your taste, and you are to be very much amused you know; you should speak to some of your acquaintances."—"I see none," said I. My aunt laughed, for some persons that she recognised were passing every minute; and she began to predict that I should speak to no one all night.—"Come," said Junot, "take courage."

My heart beat and my cheeks burnt, as though I was about to commit some bad action, but summoning resolution, I addressed myself to M. Victor de Laigle, whom I was in the habit of meeting at my mother's, and, indeed, at the entertainments of all my friends; I approached him, and in an accent which I intended to be witty, said to him: "Good evening, how do you do?"

He took my hand, eyed my figure, examined my feet, and then muttered: "Hem—hem—not much amiss——Well! but have you nothing to say to a man beyond inquiries after his health?" He retained my hand a moment longer, then dropping it, turned on his heel, saying, "What a stupid mask!"

What I felt at this moment it would be impossible to describe, to hear myself called stupid by an acquaintance! It confused me beyond all conception, and I stood rooted to the spot and actually stupified. M. Victor de Laigle was by this time at the opposite end of the room, laughing and jesting with other masks, and no doubt saying, "I have just escaped from the stupidest little mask, yonder, that I ever encountered."

It was in vain that Junot and my aunt reasoned with me; nothing could console me for having been called stupid in personal conversation? "But you must agree," said Junot, "that you deserved it; was ever such a thing heard of, as asking a man how he is, in company, by way of conversation?"—"What would you have had me say?"

"Faith, I can't tell; any thing but that." And in truth he was in the right; it was scarcely possible to be more foolish than I was this night. I never mentioned this little scene to M. Victor de Laigle, and he is still ignorant of it, unless Junot charitably informed him who it was who was so anxious about his health at the masquerade.

The result of this wearisome night, from which I expected so much pleasure, was to give me a disgust for masked balls, which for years I could not get over; nor indeed have I ever taken pleasure in them. Happily for me, this period of masked balls was nearly over, and the advance of spring made us gladly exchange our smoky toilets for the beautiful retirement of Malmaison.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

The Private Theatre of Malmaison—Esther at Madame Campan's—Representation of the Barber of Seville—Madame Louis Bonaparte as Rosina—Eugène Beauharnais and M. Didelot—M. de Bourrienne an excellent actor—Rivalry between the companies of Neuilly and Malmaison—Lucien-Zamora, and Eliza-Alzira—Mme. Murat—*Lovers' Follies*—My despair and the tight boots—The officer in white satin slippers—The theatrical sabre and a real wound—The First Consul director of the stage—Mr. Fox and Bonaparte's three countenances—Comic acting of Cambacérès—Isabey and the First Consul—General Lallemand—Michau's tragi-comic adventure during the revolution.

It would be difficult to name an occupation combining sensations so diametrically opposed as those experienced by amateur actors. Every one who has trodden the boards of a private theatre will agree with me, that no circumstances of their lives afford reminiscences more abounding in pleasure, gaiety, and joyous mirth, than the rehearsals and every thing in short that is merely preparatory. But in candour they must equally admit that the actual scenic representation is absolute torture. I have experienced both, and can speak from practical knowledge. Mademoiselle de Beauharnais's success at Madame Campan's, in the representations of Esther and other pieces, in which Mesdemoiselles Auguier and Mademoiselle Pannelier, as well as herself, gave proofs of remarkable talent, naturally induced her to bring the theatre of Malmaison into use. Eugène Beauharnais was a perfect actor. I may, without partiality, say, that Junot had superior talent; M. Didelot was an admirable Crispin; I acquitted myself tolerably in my parts, and General Lauriston a noble Almaviva, or any other lover in court dress.

But the cleverest of our company was M. de Bourrienne; he played the more dignified characters in real perfection; and his talent was the more pleasing as it was not the result of study, but of a

perfect comprehension of his part. Grandménil and Caumont, at that time the supporters of such characters at the Comédie Française, could have discovered no flaw in M. de Bourrienne's performance of Bartholo, of Albert in "Lovers' Follies," of the Miser, or of Harpagène; in "The Florentine," he might, perhaps, even furnish them occasionally with a turn of expression worth seizing and copying.

The First Consul himself was almost the sole manager of our dramatic repertory. It was at first but limited; for we dared not venture on first-rate plays, or undertake parts beyond our capacity. We played "The Heir," "The Thoughtless Ones," "The Self-Rivals," "Defiance and Malice," and a number of charming little witty pieces, and which certainly have not been equalled since either in good sense or good style. Afterwards we grew bolder; the First Consul himself demanded longer plays. The repertory was all at once increased by fifty pieces, which were put into our hands with a careful distribution of the several parts in conformity with our individual talents. The theatre of Malmaison had at that time an excellent company; latterly it was open to every one, and was no longer endurable.

The first play formally acted at Malmaison, was "The Barber of Seville," and in saying that this representation was perfect I do not hazard a word that the magic of memory can call in question. We have still many survivors of that merry and delightful period, and I fear no contradiction in asserting again, that "The Barber of Seville" was acted at the theatre of Malmaison better than it could now be performed on *any theatre in Paris.*

Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais took the part of Rosina; M. de Bourrienne that of Bartholo; M. Didelot, Figaro; General Lauriston, Almaviva; Eugène, Basile; and General Savary sneezed in perfection in the part of the Sleeper Awakened.

I have just observed that Bourrienne played well because he understood and felt his part. The same may be said of Mademoiselle Hortense. In order to act well we must be able to demonstrate the part to others as soon as we have read it—and this she could do; gaiety, wit, sensibility, delicacy, all that the author Beaumarchais meant to infuse into his Rosina, Madame Louis caught instinctively; she entered into the character of the young and fair Andalusian with all her native grace and elegance. To her fine acting she united a charming figure and an exquisite carriage, especially on the stage. Many years have elapsed since those joyous evenings, but my memory still forcibly recalls the graceful and pleasing image of Mademoiselle Beauharnais, with her profusion of fair ringlets beneath

a black velvet hat, ornamented with long pink feathers, and the black dress so admirably fitted to her small and symmetrical shape! I seem yet to see and hear her, and it is a truly sweet and smiling illusion.

Her brother Eugène was equally perfect as Basile, and M. de Bourrienne in the part of Bartholo. General Lauriston succeeded well in the various situations of Almaviva, though some fault was found with those of the soldier and the bachelor. He was not altogether perfect till the grandee of Spain reappeared under the mantle of the bachelor. M. Didelot was excellent in Figaro.

But our success was most remarkable in that point which generally reduces the managers of private theatres to despair, that is to say, the perfect correspondence of the whole piece; the parts were thoroughly learnt, and every thing went off well. I repeat that the performance of "The Barber of Seville" has never on any stage afforded me the same pleasure I experienced that evening.

Madame Murat sometimes acted at Malmaison. She was very pretty. Her hands and arms were beautiful, and her fair bosom acquired new brilliancy beneath a black velvet bodice, with a gold stomacher; but she had an unfortunate accent, which was particularly fatal to the parts she selected. Her sisterly relation to the First Consul, however, screened this defect from observation, whereas Madame Louis Bonaparte, had she been but the wife of an aide-de-camp, must have been applauded for the excellence of her acting.

This reminds me of an incident which befell me, partly through the instrumentality of Madame Murat, at least through her want of acquaintance with the stage. There was a sort of rivalry between Malmaison and Neuilly. Lucien frequently acted both in tragedy and comedy with his eldest sister, Madame Bacciocchi. Lucien acquitted himself admirably, and declaimed to perfection. His only failing, and that not altogether dependent on himself, was the modulation of his voice, which was too shrill and in too elevated a key for a tragic tone. But this inconvenience was slight, and Lucien gave great satisfaction as Zamora; I have heard his performance criticised; in my own judgment, I did not perceive the defects attributed to him, and I was delighted with him almost throughout the part. Not so with Madame Bacciocchi. Her acting was irresistibly laughable. The First Consul found it so, and far from flying into a rage, as M. de Bourrienne represents, he did nothing but laugh during the whole play, whenever his sister appeared on the stage, and when we returned to the drawing-room, he exclaimed, "I think we have seen

Alzira beautifully parodied;" he repeated the same thing to Madame Bacciocchi herself, who was not best pleased with it.

Plays of all kinds, of three and afterwards of five acts, were performed at Neuilly: we had no fear of tragedy, still less of comedy. Regnard's *Lovers' Follies*, not too perfectly represented, spurred us to emulation. It was got up at Malmaison. Madame Louis was to undertake Agatha, Lisette was assigned to me, Albert to M. de Bourrienne, Erasto to Eugène, and Crispin to M. Didelot.

By this management the piece would have been well managed, but the spirit of mischief intervened. Madame Louis, always good-natured and yielding at the first request, reversed the whole order of things. Madame Murat performed Lisette. Agatha, a part which I did not like, and which was nowise suited to me, fell to my lot, and as the climax of misfortune, for some reason I do not remember, Eugène could not play Erasto; this was known only two days before the representation, and Junot was obliged in that time to learn the whole part and to act it with only a single rehearsal: but all this was nothing in comparison of what followed.

This unfortunate part of Agatha is very difficult; it requires much judgment. A ray of reason must be always perceptible to the lover, while the guardian, though an acute and sensible man, must believe his young ward a confirmed idiot; then a degree of sentiment must pervade all that chaos of singing, dancing, accident and battle; in short it is extremely difficult to play the part well, and Dugazon, who was my instructor and set his heart on my success, had nearly overset my courage by saying to me one day,

"You must not play this part, you will fail as completely as they do at Neuilly." "Oh! don't say so!" I exclaimed, terrified at the idea. "I have no doubt of it," he proceeded; "and the more certainly as you are horribly supported. The General, too, has a part that does not suit him. The play will be a total failure."

And thereupon Dugazon began to mimic every one who was to support the dialogue with me, and with such buffoonery that it was impossible to avoid laughing till the tears came. My self-love, however, would not permit me to laugh at his prophecy that the play would prove a failure, and I did all in my power to prevent it; but there was no remedy, and the hour of the tragi-comedy arrived at length.

To form a just conception of the terror (that is the proper word) felt by us *comedians in ordinary* of Malmaison, it should be premised that on the day of our representation, which was generally Wednesday, it was the First Consul's habit to invite forty persons to dinner,

and a hundred and fifty for the evening, and consequently to hear, criticise and banter us without mercy. The consuls, the ministers, the diplomatic body, counsellors of state, senators, their wives, and all the members of the then military household of the First Consul, formed our audience. But the most terrible bugbear was the First Consul himself. There he sat in his box, close beside us, his eyes following us and accompanying their course with a smile more or less arch, the justice of which was in truth most formidable.

The morning of the representation of *Lovers' Follies*, Dugazon said to me, after hearing Bourrienne rehearse Albert admirably: "Well, take courage, my pupil, you will save the state. You two may do wonders. Crispin is good too. As for the General, his part is nothing. Come, carry this off successfully and you will deserve well of the country by foiling a conspiracy."

In the part of Agatha the dress is changed five or six times. I had requested Madame Murat, and Dugazon also had charged her, not to enter the stage to commence the third act without first ascertaining that I had completed my officer's dress under my black domino, as the old grandmother. The two first acts had passed off tolerably, with the exception of a few errors of memory and some little deficiency of spirit; but the piece still marched—it was soon destined to limp.

Whether from misunderstanding or forgetfulness, Lisette appeared upon the scene without troubling herself about me. The question whether or no I was ready was, however, deserving of attention, for but a very short scene intervenes between that in which I receive the money from Albert, and my return as an officer. It was, therefore, imperatively necessary that I should be in full costume underneath my great black cloak, and I was accordingly putting on my boots, when I heard the first lines of the act; I cried out directly, but in vain; I had not yet come to the end of my troubles. The day was suffocatingly hot: agitation and fear threw me almost into a fever, which did not accelerate matters; the boots would not come on, and while my waiting-maid pulled till she almost broke my leg, my ancle began to swell. At length I heard the speech preceding my own, and throwing the boot ten feet off, I hastily assumed my black domino and entered upon the scene; but my poor head was wandering. I mechanically repeated the words assigned me, but my feet at the moment occupied my whole attention.

In an interval between the couplets I whispered to Junot, "What can I do, I cannot get my boots on!"

"Hey! What?" said he, for he could not hear. I repeated the

same thing to Bourrienne, but as I spoke very low and quickly, neither of them understood; this little by-play, however, so puzzling to them, began to excite more notice than I wished in other quarters. At last I made my exit, ran to my boots and endeavoured to draw them on—impossible; the foot was still more swelled, and I might as easily have shod the colossus of Rhodes, as have driven my feet into either of them. At this moment Dugazon, who was roaming about behind the scenes, arrived to witness my despair. He ran up to me and embracing me said, "All goes on well, but what the deuce were you looking for under your feet just now?" As my brain at the moment retained but one fixed idea, I answered staring at him in utter consternation, "I cannot get my boots on!"—"You have not your boots on," said he swearing, "you have not your boots on?"

At that moment my husband's valet, who was to bring me a very small sabre that I had ordered, tapped at my room door, and presenting a sword as large as a Mahomet's Damascus blade, told me in his German jargon, that my sabre was not ready, but that he had brought me the smallest of the *Chenevat's*, and it was necessary to be cautious in using it, for it would cut like a razor.

"Here is a new trouble!" I exclaimed.

"Eh! do not be uneasy," said Dugazon, capering, "it is all very well. You have a great coat; never mind black shoes, keep on your white ones. Agatha is mad: it is no disguise. All those about her know that an access of her malady has just seized her, and that she has assumed a military dress because her head is unsteady. Well, she has forgotten her white shoes! really, upon my honour, this is not amiss."

Saying this, he pushed me on the stage, and it was fortunate that he did so, for my turn was come, and I should never have had the courage to appear thus as an officer of dragoons in white satin slippers. I took good care not to look towards the First Consul's box; to have seen his smile or frown would have struck me mute.

The result of this fine story is, that I played the last scene like a true maniac. But owing to these unlucky boots, I forgot the Turkish sabre and its sharpness, and when at the conclusion Agatha flourishes it about the ears of Albert, and then suddenly falls into a swoon, the point of the unfortunate Damascus penetrated my white slipper, and made a deep cut in my foot, of which I still bear the scar.

But let me ask, was any one ever seen to enter a theatre in the dress of a dragoon officer, and in white satin slippers?

The First Consul was for six months unmerciful upon those un-

lucky white slippers. I verily think he would have dragged them into a discussion even upon the bull *Unigenitus*.

I now remember it was the same day that the conversation turning at table on the pleasure of acting in the country, the First Consul said to Cambacérès, who expressed his participation in it, "That this pleasure could consist only in hearsay, for he surely had never taken part in a comedy." Cambacérès seemed piqued, and replied in an accent really amusing when contrasted with his melancholy and severe countenance:

"And why, citizen First Consul, do you think that I have not gaiety enough to act in comedy?" "Really, citizen Cambacérès," replied Napoleon, "I think you have no gaiety at all."

"Well! I have very often acted in comedy, nevertheless, not only at Montpellier, but at Béziers, at the house of an old family friend, where for six months in the year the theatre was in activity; and one of the parts in which I was eminently successful, was that of Renaud d'Aste."

"And did you sing?" cried Madame Bonaparte, and all the party laughed; but Cambacérès, no way disconcerted by our hilarity, continued, "And as all the characters suited me alike, I played equally well Le Montauciel, in the Deserter. This time the laugh was universal. But Cambacérès was not easily turned from an agreeable subject; and having once entered on the history of his scenic adventure, the petty jealousies and intrigues of his company, there was no stopping him under half an hour; the rather, as Napoleon, his elbow on the table, listened, with an attention which did not surprise me, because I had observed the interest with which he would attend to our reports of the thousand little incidents that arise during the rehearsal of a play. The First Consul should have been seen in his functions of stage president to be known under an aspect entirely different from all his portraits. "The First Consul at Malmaison, the First Consul at St. Cloud, and the First Consul at the Tuileries," said Mr. Fox to me, "are three men forming together the *beau idéal* of human greatness; but I could wish to be a painter," added he, "to take his portrait under these three different characters, because I should have three resemblances of the same face, with three different countenances."

The statesman was right: I had remarked it before him, and was pleased at hearing my own idea so strikingly expressed by the man whom, of all Englishmen, I at that time most highly appreciated. I also then entertained for the Deliverer of France an admiration bordering on fanaticism. I would have wished to see the world at his

feet, and England appeared to me to render him homage in the gratifying speech of Fox, to which I attached more value than really belonged to it. It was, however, perfectly true, and Bonaparte at Malmaison was admirable in extreme simplicity.

One of our best actors was Isabey, perhaps the very best, Queen Hortense excepted. He, however, ceased to form often a member of our *corps comique*, rather than *dramatique*, for reasons which were but imperfectly explained.

One day the First Consul, on dismounting from his horse, and traversing the gallery adjoining the centre saloon at Malmaison, stopped to examine a portfolio of engravings which had been placed upon a table at the park end of the gallery. Isabey is said to have entered a moment after him, from the theatre, and by the opposite door at the end next the court. The First Consul was then slim, and wore the uniform of the *guides* or *horse chasseurs* of the guard—that beloved uniform, the very sight of which makes the heart beat. Eugène Beauharnais, as I have before observed, was colonel of that fine regiment. Isabey, who had not heard the First Consul return from his ride, seeing a small slender figure at the end of the gallery, dressed in the uniform of the *chasseurs*, and observing the two epaulettes, supposed it to be Eugène, with whom he was extremely intimate, and determined to take him by surprise. Dexterous, light, active and supple as a cat in his movements, he advanced softly without the slightest sound to within a short distance, then taking a spring, leaped at one bound upon the First Consul, and alighted a-straddle on his neck. Napoleon imagined the house was falling or that the *old gentleman* was come to strangle him. Rising up he disengaged himself by main force from his new-fashioned collar, and threw *poor Isabey* in his turn upon the ground, and, presenting to his dismayed view a countenance for which he was certainly little prepared, demanded in a severe tone,

"What is the meaning of this buffoonery?"

"I thought it was Eugène," stammered out the luckless youth.

"And suppose it was Eugène," replied the First Consul, "must you needs break his shoulder-bones?" And he walked out of the gallery.

This story, though carefully concealed, was soon bruited about. The First Consul had too much tact not to perceive that his was the ridiculous share of the adventure; Isabey understood it to the full as well, and both would willingly have kept the secret.

But whether the one in the first moment of his terror related the whole to Eugène himself, or the other in his resentment could not withhold it from Madame Bonaparte, the affair got wind. I know that

a short time afterwards its truth was denied. At all events, if it caused the derparture of Isabey and his loss to our company, I must call it injustice, and an act of useless injustice, for truly one must be lineally descended, and without any mixture of inferior blood, from Timon or Heraclitus, to think of the First Consul escaladed in this fashion, without laughing.

General Lallemans, at that time aide-de-camp to my husband, was one of our best actors. I have seen but few good comedians, and of those, very few indeed were his equals.

His talent was natural, but had been improved by the instructions of Michau, from whom he imbibed a portion of that ease and humour which was the principal charm of Michau's own acting.

This excellent man once said to me, "It is always useful to make people laugh," and in illustration of this truth related an anecdote of himself. Passing once quietly along the streets he encountered one of those disorderly mobs that were in the habit of parading Paris in those happy days when the lamp post served for hanging up our gallant citizens; they would have made him join their march, but he resisted, and demanded, in the name of that liberty whose scarlet ensign was as usual conspicuous in the foremost group, that he should be suffered to continue his route in pursuance of his own affairs. The discussion was brief, the lamp was shattered, and poor Michau, already stripped of his coat, was on the point of being hoisted in its place, when a fat fellow, with his plump arms bare, and a red and jolly face, rushed into the midst of the banditti, and snatched Michau from their grasp, exclaiming—

"What are you about, simpletons, don't you know Punch of the *Republic?*" The *Comédie Française* was at that time called the *Théâtre de la République.*

And thanks to his title of Punch, with which his deliverer, the butcher's boy, had invested him, Michau found himself at liberty, and accepted the apologies which two hundred rascals offered as coolly for their design of hanging him as if they had simply trodden on his toes.

CHAPTER LXIX.

The fruit of our triumphs and the peace with Austria—Brilliant festivities at Paris—Revival of trade—The balls of Malmaison—Luxury and elegance—Negotiations at Luneville—General Brune's victories—The Archduke Charles and Marshal Bellegarde—Early history of General Brune—His exploits in Holland and Italy—The Convention of Montfaucon—The battle of Pozzolo—Brune appointed a Marshal of France—His interview with Gustavus IV.—His disgrace—His command in Provence—His tragical death and prophetical verses—Bourrienne's misrepresentations—Madame de Montesson and the Lieutenant of Hussars—Bonaparte chooses to be informed of every thing—Junot's supposed police.

A CONTINUED series of victories of the French arms had at length determined Austria to conclude the treaty of peace: it was signed at Luneville by Count Louis von Cobentzel for the Emperor and Germanic Body on the one part, and by Joseph Bonaparte in the name of the French Republic, which might still call itself one, and more than ever indivisible. All who had been concerned in the Congress came to Paris, to share in the magnificent fêtes which the First Consul commanded, that the people might have an opportunity of testifying their joy, and that a free circulation of money might revive commerce, and give work to that multitude of individuals who, to the number of a hundred thousand, exist in Paris by the labour of their hands—a labour which, though chiefly devoted to objects of luxury, produces those commodities which the higher classes, especially in the seasons of festivity, can no more do without than the lower can subsist without bread. The fêtes given by the government were a signal not only to Paris, but to the whole of France, for balls, dinners, and social assemblages of every kind. Hence commenced in Paris, at this period, life and gaiety, which ceased not to animate it till the change introduced in 1814. Each succeeding day brought ten invitations for the evening.

The Oriental luxury which the Emperor afterwards introduced into his court was not then known. Madame Bonaparte, who possessed in the highest perfection the art of dressing, set the example of extreme elegance. No sight could be more exhilarating than a ball at Malmaison, composed of the numerous young women connected with the military household which the First Consul had just formed, and who

constituted, without having yet received the name, the Court of Madame Bonaparte. All were young; many were pretty, and I know but one ugly enough to merit the epithet; when this beautiful group was attired in robes of white crape trimmed with flowers, and their hair ornamented with garlands as fresh as the complexion of their merry faces, smiling with happiness and good humour, it was a charming and striking spectacle to see the animated dance which derived its zest from their gaiety, in the same room in which the First Consul and the most renowned characters of Europe were promenading. These assemblies required a continual renewal of dress, and the first year of the Consulate constantly saw the revival of that trade in the manufacturing towns of France which again became an honour to the country. The government officers, no doubt, made smaller accumulations, or laid out less money on estates; but shop-keepers sold their goods, domestics procured places, and workmen got into employment, through the medium of from eight to ten thousand balls, and five or six thousand dinners, which were given in the course of the winter at Paris. From this order of things it followed, that the silk-mercers sold a million yards of satin or velvet, crape and tulle in proportion, the shoemakers manufactured their shoes, the artificial florist was called to assist at the toilet with his flowers, the hair-dresser and dress-maker with their industry, and the perfumer with his gloves, fans, and essences. The higher classes of trade were equally indispensable; the jeweller, the goldsmith, the glass and porcelain manufacturer, the upholsterer, the cabinet-maker, all flourished; the money passed through their hands into those of their workpeople, and the immense population of this great town were all employed and all happy, because the superior classes received company, and expended their incomes in an honourable manner. I have known the people of the Faubourgs at this period, when to be peaceful they asked only to be employed, and work was furnished to them in abundance. More virtuous or more noble sentiments will nowhere be found than among the working classes of Paris. Never did they rise into tumult through the whole course of the revolution, except when driven into violence by misery and hunger. Hunger! the most imperious of wants! that which blinds the eye and deafens the ear to all other considerations, and ripens the fruits sown by an improvident government—despair and revolt.

But at the epoch* of which I am writing things were not so; all prospered. The peace of Luneville, which secured to France the

* The 9th of February, 1801.

Rhine as the limit, had been signed. The concessions stipulated at Campo-Formio, between General Bonaparte and Count Louis von Cobentzel, were confirmed; these concessions were the duchies of Milan, of Mantua and Modena, together with the Ionian Islands, to be added to the Cisalpine Republic; all was glory shed upon France by the First Consul, and sensibly felt by a grateful nation.

All this was not however achieved without much hesitation on the part of the Austrians; it was the necessity of retreating on all sides before our cannons which first induced Austria to treat without the consent of England, notwithstanding her recent engagement to the contrary. This was a great victory gained over English gold. But Joseph Bonaparte, after having given some grand dinners at Paris to the Count von Cobentzel, in which department we had given him all the assistance in our power, was obliged to maintain against him, at Luneville, many long and worn discussions upon every point to be surrendered, for, alas! we were unreasonable, and asked, the plenipotentiary thought, too much. Happily for the success of Joseph's negotiations he received, just at the critical moment, a courier from General Brune, bringing a copy of a despatch to the First Consul, announcing a victory in the true republican style of conciseness:

"Citizen First Consul,

"I have the honour to inform you that I crossed the Adige, yesterday, the 1st of January, immediately above Verona; which puts me into a position to announce to you very shortly the occupation of that town.

"I salute you with respect,

"BRUNE."

Accordingly on the 3d of January Verona was occupied by our troops, as well as Vincenza some days afterwards, and the Brenta was then crossed. In fact, the army was now on the march, and with sufficient rapidity to form a junction with Moreau, who, on his part, encamped at the distance of twenty-five leagues from Vienna, had concluded an armistice with His Imperial Highness the Archduke Charles, a good prince, an honest man, and a great captain, but always unfortunate. M. de Bellegarde, who was so too, (that is, unfortunate, for the rest I am not competent to speak,) took the same method to obtain some quiet sleep. An armistice was concluded between him and General Brune; and three weeks after, the glorious treaty of Luneville was signed, which wholly restored Marshal Bellegarde's repose, and I may add, *en passant*, that of some other Austrian

generals-in-chief, who had had enough of this war. The Prince Charles was the only one of them whose noble conduct, even under every reverse, was worthy of his exalted birth and great soul. I more than esteem the character of this prince, and believe I know it as well as a personage of his rank can be known, without the advantage of personal access; but I know enough of him to fix my opinion upon bases which ensure my veneration.

Brune, who gave so fortunate an impetus to the diplomacy of Luneville, was born at Brives, and like all natives of the south, was ardent, active, fond of literature, poetry, and the fine arts; he possessed a large share of information and betook himself to composition. To facilitate the publication of his works he became a printer; and at this period of his life the revolution opened. Brune was young; his head and heart confessed but one idea—glory and his country! He was a patriot in the true sense of the word; all that passed under his eye added fuel to his thoughts. He soon cast away his pen, ink, and paper, and took up the sword and the gun to enter into one of those battalions of heroes which France produced by thousands, in those radiant days of glory and liberty, and which were formed without the necessity of beating to arms. His battalion of the Seine and Oise was commanded by General Lapoype.

None of our marshals have been so falsely represented to the public opinion as Brune. He was not one of Moreau's generals, as it was the fashion to denominate all those who had served in the army of the Rhine. Had the restored Prince believed him so, they would surely have protected him from the popular fury, as senseless as all the accusations which have been advanced against him; but Brune did not belong to the army of the Rhine; neither was he in Paris in the autumn of 1792. Those, therefore, who accuse him of participating in the horrible saturnalia of the Septembrisers, to which, had he been at Paris, he would neither in heart, word, or jest have assented, should, before staining his life with a falsehood, in order to palliate the horror of his death, have ascertained whether in physical possibility he could have committed the atrocious crime with which he is charged, and of which an alibi of several hundred leagues is, I apprehend, a sufficient refutation. Brune was not at Paris in September, 1792, but at Radmack.

Brune advanced rapidly to an elevated rank in the army; he had courage and good will, an union always tending to success, but at this period ensuring it. The cannon cleared the ranks with a frightful rapidity, and made sure way to promotion for those who obtained the notice of their chiefs, though it might be only to advance them more

certainly to the honours of a soldier's grave. The cradle of Brune's glory was the army of Italy, then under the command of Kellerman and Brunet. It is, however, remarkable, that notwithstanding the activity of Brune's military life, and a renown well earned before General Bonaparte's accession to the command of the army of Italy in 1795, he is scarcely mentioned in the journals of the time; the *Moniteur*, for example, notices him only in 1797. Brune, however, largely contributed his contingent of glory to the three brilliant days preceding and following the battle of Rivoli, which decided the fate of Italy. He was soon after named general-in-chief of the army in Helvetia; laid siege to Berne, and by its surrender produced the submission of all Switzerland. From thence he was removed to the Texel, to oppose the landing of the Anglo-Russian army under the command of the Duke of York, which might have been a fatal event for France, while at the same moment Massena was sinking in Switzerland under the superior force of Zurich.

The road to Paris was open, and Brune, with twenty thousand men, whom the Directory kept in a state of inefficient provision, was to check the advance of an Anglo-Russian army, which had disembarked at Alkmaar, and was joined by a Dutch force of eighteen thousand men. The Duke of York was entirely beaten at Bergen, which led to the capitulation of his whole army at Alkmaar; and Massena at the same time gained the battle of Zurich; two victories which saved France, as Marshal Villars had saved her at Denain.

Peace now granted a momentary security to our frontier, and the overthrow of the Directory opened a prospect of good government to France; the First Consul's most anxious cares were directed to the re-establishment of order in those fine provinces so long desolated by internal conflicts, and he sent Brune into the west, where General Hedouville had already prepared that convention, which was signed almost immediately after, and secured the submission and tranquillity of both sides of the Loire. At this period the First Consul appointed him to the command of the army of Italy, which brings us to the point whence we set out.

It was at this period, in the month of November, 1800, that Macdonald, at the head of the army of the Grisons, comprehending the full importance of his junction with Brune, penetrated into the Valteline by the passage of the Splugen, one of the most elevated summits of the Alps, and braving tempests and avalanches, succeeded in his prodigious efforts by the most unprecedented display of courage and industry. But to the chief of the staff of this army, General Matthew Dumas, who is still living amongst us, is to be attributed, perhaps,

more than even Macdonald himself, this triumph over the wrathful elements and stepdame Nature; all the resources which patience, vigilance, activity, and philanthropy, could supply to the warrior, he provided in forestalling his wants, and protecting him from other dangers than those of the sword and the cannon. Brune meanwhile was attempting the passage of the Mincio, in face of the fine army of Marshal Bellegarde; the battle of Pozzolo, in which Suchet, unsupported, sustained for many hours the whole weight of the enemy's forces, and which was finally decided by an admirable charge of cavalry, under Davoust, enabled him, on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of December, 1800, to effect his purpose, and nearly destroyed the Austrian army. Its ultimate important influence upon the conditions of the peace of Luneville has been already detailed.

Brune now returned to France, retired to his estate of St. Just, in Campagne, did good in his neighbourhood, and amused himself with literature. In 1804 he was one of the sixteen marshals whom Bonaparte appointed on the establishment of the empire. In 1807 Brune was ordered with a *corps d'armée* into Swedish Pomerania; he took Stralsund and the Isle of Rugen, and forced the Swedish army to retire. His interview with the King of Sweden, during the siege of Stralsund, the particulars of which, as published by Gustavus Brune, denied to be correct, caused Napoleon's high displeasure; he continued for many years in disgrace, and the name of the conqueror of Bergen and the pacificator of the East was, during this period, never pronounced.

On Napoleon's return, however, in March, 1815, Marshal Brune was drawn from his retirement, and accepted a post of great confidence and delicacy—the command of the eighth military division, which committed the peace of the south to his keeping. The restoration of Louis XVIII. and his re-entry into Paris found Brune at his post; he went to Toulon himself to restore the white flag there, lest its re-appearance should be the signal for popular tumult, and was afterwards summoned to Paris. It was on his way thither, at Avignon, that he met with the dreadful death which has stained the era to which it belongs with indelible infamy. Many important particulars of it, which I have received from an eyewitness, I reserve till my narrative brings me to its proper place; nor should I have introduced the subject at present, but for an interesting and important fact connected with the period of his command in Italy, and which I cannot omit here. To appreciate it properly, the reader must be acquainted with the principal circumstances of the case, which I shall therefore slightly state.

Marshal Brune, on reaching Avignon, was warned that much agitation prevailed in the town, and that it was particularly directed against him; he was strongly recommended to avoid passing through; but turning a deaf ear to all advice, he commanded his postillions to drive to the post-house; here an armed mob of 800 men, calling themselves royalists, besieged him in a room to which they had driven him for refuge; the mayor, the prefect, and a few *gensd'armes* succeeded in protecting him during four hours from their infuriated attacks, while three thousand citizens looked with apathy upon the atrocious scene, without affording the smallest assistance. The gallant resistance of the police was at length overpowered, and under the stupid pretence that the Marshal had been the murderer of the Princess of Lamballe, a vile slander generally circulated, and which I have refuted above, in proving that he was not at Paris when that tragedy was performed, he was put to death by the mob in the most barbarous manner; his lacerated corpse, after being dragged through the mud, was thrown into the Rhone; and the river refusing to contain it, it lay two days unburied upon the strand, whither the waves had cast it.

The curious incident, which though it occurred eighteen years previously, is so closely connected with the tragical event, took place in Italy in the year 1797. General Massena was called to Milan by General Bonaparte, then commanding in chief, to assist at some national festival. The command of Massena's division then devolved on Brune, who celebrated the same fête at Padua. A banquet was given, at which much patriotic poetry was read and sung. General Brune, who was a man of literature and fond of poetry, heard some stanzas of a song, the principles of which pleased him, and he composed impromptu the following couplets which he sang in conclusion:

Against one, two hundred rise,
Assail and smite him till he dies;
Yet blood, say they, we spare to spill;
And patriots we account them still!

Urged by martial ardour on,
In the wave their victim's thrown,
Their fanatic joy to fill!
Yet these men are patriots still!

What an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances! what a singular colouring does this unpremeditated composition cast over the fate of Brune! Little did he suppose himself prophesying, and yet with what strange mystery are the future details of his horrible

death here related in anticipation! This account of the composition of these verses is perfectly authentic; it was given me by an officer who was present at the dinner when they were sung, as was the Chevalier Suchet, brother of Marshal Suchet, who can certify the truth of the whole history.

Before returning, according to the thread of my narrative, to the Count Louis von Cobentzel and the state of things introduced at Paris by the treaty of Luneville, I will take advantage of the break already made in it to mention one of the misrepresentations of M. de Bourrienne; one which I am the more bound to correct because it affects the memory of Junot. I know not whether the time which has elapsed since the facts which he relates has driven from his memory a number of circumstances which he must have known, and thereby caused the false colouring he gives to many things; as for example, he speaks of Junot's secret police, when he certainly ought to know that Junot never was intrusted with any direction of the police. Junot was necessarily acquainted with many facts and events, because the military commandant of a great town receives a daily report as to its interior order or disorder, and this opened to him an infinity of doors of observation, into which sometimes he would not even look. Frequently, indeed, have I seen reports given in by the old adjutant Laborde, which Junot has made him transcribe, in order to omit certain names or some words which might compromise the parties concerned in them, and were of no importance to the safety of the First Consul. On this subject I will cite an anecdote.

A lady of considerable importance in good society was involved in the reports concerning some conspiracy under the Consulate; I do not remember whether it was the infernal machine or that of Chevalier; but the fact was, that this lady, perfectly innocent, had been induced by the giddiness of a young fool to give him an asylum against the political proscription he had incurred, while he represented the cause of his danger to her as totally different from the fact. The *gend'armerie* traced him, and took him from under the wing of Madame de Montesson. The lady no sooner discovered the real state of the case, than in great alarm she hastened to visit Junot. She was held in much consideration by the First Consul: Madame Bonaparte was attached to her; she felt herself deserving of their good will, and the base idea of figuring in an affair which must come under the cognisance of the tribunals distressed her exceedingly. Junot immediately perceived that she had committed no intentional error, and the report was altered: the name of Madame de Montesson did not appear in it, there was no occasion that it should; the

young man was arrested, which was the point in requisition. Some time afterwards the First Consul asked Junot, "In what house was the young lieutenant of the 12th arrested?" For a moment Junot was posed, but he remembered that it had been inserted in the report, that he had been taken when walking in the Champs-Elysées, and he answered accordingly. The First Consul answered Junot, pulling him by the ear,

"You have a bad memory, Junot, he was arrested at Madame de Montesson's house." He then added more seriously, "You were right, my dear Junot, in listening to Madame de Montesson's request; I have a respect for her, and I am glad you did not insert her name in the report; but you should have mentioned it verbally to me, and not have wholly forgotten the circumstance."

In this little trait the character of Napoleon is very conspicuous. He would always know everything, and was offended by the smallest concealment. Junot discovered Fouché to have been the channel by which the First Consul became acquainted with this affair.

I have reported this little history to prove that Junot suppressed whatever tended to scandal, if it had no immediate reference to the Emperor's safety. Many of these reports are to this day among his papers; they are purely military, but in these times of trouble were the depositories of many names connected with affairs into which the police were prying, but which, fortunately for their proprietors, fell into the hands of a man of honour. With respect to the large sums which Junot received for the secret police of the capital, and of which he remitted an annuity of 3000 francs to a bad bulletinist, I know nothing of them. I suppose, however, that the First Consul, unwilling to charge all the appointments of the commandant of Paris upon the military funds, gave Junot a pension upon the extraordinary revenue raised by the minister of police, and which was solely at his own disposal: the daily reports were drawn up at the station of the military staff of Paris or the Quai de Voltaire, and were brought to Junot by the chief of the staff, the adjutant-general Doucet, under whose orders several adjutants exercised a close *surveillance* over the peace and good order of Paris: these were Junot's agents and bulletinists, but they were no spies of police. I may add, that never did Junot, nor Marshal Mortier, who, in his quality of general commanding the first military division, was his chief, in the performance of their duty compromise one innocent person. But I can easily conceive that there are men whose crooked policy wishing always to remain in shadow, would endeavour to the utmost to frustrate the object of all these cares, and failing to do so would spare

no slander which might bring those cares into disrepute. Hence, I apprehend, the origin of the animosity with which the military staff of Paris has been pursued.

CHAPTER LXX.

Count Louis von Cobentzel—His taste for fêtes and frivolities—Anecdote of his embassy to the court of Catherine—The theatre of the Hermitage—The ambassador as Countess d'Escarbagnas—The novice courier and his despatches—Change of costume—Victories of Bonaparte and diplomacy in masquerade—Lord Whitworth—Talents and manners of Count Cobentzel—Count Philip Cobentzel his successor.

Count Louis von Cobentzel, who had just signed, at Luneville, the treaty of peace between Austria and France, was the greatest lover of spectacles, fêtes, and all kinds of merry diversions, that I have ever met with in my life. The Emperor, his master, had made a judicious selection in appointing him envoy for signing a treaty of peace. He interested himself in the programmes of all the intended fêtes; enjoyed them by anticipation, and gave his opinion on the preparations.

I frequently saw him; for, as he was passionately fond of plays, and I had a box at all the theatres, he preferred going privately with Junot and me, to appearing in the official box of the minister for foreign affairs.

Count Louis was middle aged, very ugly, and is truly reported to have resembled Mirabeau. He had the same sallow face, and his eyes, which, however, bore no other resemblance to those of Mirabeau, were equally small. He had also the same enormous head of hair, which gave so singular an effect to Mirabeau's countenance (I am not speaking of resemblance in the intellectual countenance). Count Louis was lively and sensible, but withal had plenty of follies; follies which he is said to have only adopted in imitation of Prince Kaunitz. He had been for a long time Austrian ambassador at the court of the great Catherine, and retained a profound and enthusiastic admiration for that sovereign, who kept a theatre, played herself, and carried the condescension so far as to write comedies for the amusement of her court. When Count Louis von Cobentzel was once launched on this favourite topic, it was a vain hope to extract a word from him that did not bear reference to the theatre at the Hermitage,

in which his frightful person would certainly not set off his dramatic talents to the best advantage.

The First Consul related to us one evening, that M. de Cobentzel had had a little theatre constructed in the palace of the Austrian ambassador at Petersburgh, principally with the object, as you may suppose, of acting himself. One day the ambassador was to assume the character of the Countess d'Escarbagnas. The Empress had promised to be present, and the *Count-Countess* was dressed early to be in readiness for appearing on the stage the moment the Czarina had taken her seat. She arrived, and the ambassador was sought for, but neither he *nor the Countess* could be found. At length, after a tiresome search, he was discovered in his cabinet, in male attire indeed, but with his hair puffed, in high-heeled shoes, and so suffocated with passion, that he could scarcely articulate the words, "Hang that villain for me," pointing to a man who was praying all the saints in Heaven to defend him from the supposed madman.

This was a courier from Vienna arrived in haste, with very important despatches, and specially ordered to deliver them into the ambassador's own hands; for Catherine II. made no scruple of violating the seals, not only of her own subjects, but of foreigners, and even ambassadors, whose diplomatic character is a sacred defence, even amongst the most savage nations. M. de Beausset, when ambassador from France, made serious complaints of this gross breach of international law. The courier was a young man, recently attached to the foreign office, and had never even seen the Count Cobentzel. He arrived at seven in the evening, just as the Count, having finished his toilet as Countess d'Escarbagnas, was complacently contemplating the reflection in a large looking-glass of a figure which has perhaps never since been paralleled; smiling at his whimsical visage, adding a patch, flirting his fan, enlarging his hoop, and repeating the most striking passages of his part. At this moment the courier from Vienna was announced. The Count replied that he would see him the next morning, but at present he was otherwise occupied; recommending that he should repose himself for the night, and leave business till the morning.

But the young man was a novice in diplomacy, and scrupulously conscientious in discharging his commission. His orders were to use all diligence and at whatever price to reach Petersburgh before midnight on this very day. He was arrived, and loudly and pertinaciously insisted on seeing the ambassador. One of the secretaries informed M. de Cobentzel of the courier's orders. "Why, what does the obstinate fellow want? Is he possessed? Well, send him in."

The secretary, accustomed to the fooleries of his master, without an instant's reflection on the necessity of preparing a stranger for the interview, introduced him into the cabinet, saying, "There is the ambassador. And the courier found himself in the presence of a woman dressed in the fashion of his grandmother's days, who advanced affectedly to meet him, and while putting with one hand an extra patch on a round cheek, already concealed behind a thick coat of rouge, stretched out the other to receive the packet, saying, "Well, sir, let us see the famous despatches." The courier turned round instead of answering, to request an explanation of the strange spectacle that thus presented itself. But the secretary had vanished; the door was shut, and he found himself alone with the burlesque vision.

"I wish to speak to the ambassador," cried the young man, whose brain, somewhat heated by the fatigue of several days' rapid travelling, was nearly overset upon seeing a masquerade figure seize the ministerial packet, and endeavour to snatch it from him, saying all the while,

"Here is the ambassador! I am the ambassador!"

The young Austrian was stout, and retained a firm hold of the deposit confided to him; but beginning to be frightened, he called for help, insisting on seeing the ambassador, and refusing to recognise him under this disguise. In vain Count Cobentzel ran after him round the cabinet, explaining why, on this particular occasion, he was dressed in his fine brocaded gown and velvet petticoat. Greek would have been more intelligible to his companion. At length the Count exclaimed in despair,

"Well, blockhead, you shall see him, you shall see your ambassador;" and entering his bedchamber, he threw off his gown and petticoat, and returned to the obstinate courier in white silk stockings, high-heeled shoes, black breeches, and puffed hair;—another edition of my dragoon's dress, and white satin shoes.

Accordingly the young courier, more than ever persuaded of his insanity, persisted in refusing to surrender the imperial packet, till the ambassador was growing seriously angry, when, to complete his fury, the Empress's arrival was announced to him. The secretary of the embassy explained this strange scene to the diplomatic courier, and persuaded him at length to give his despatches into the hands of Count Louis von Cobentzel. The Count read them, and found them indeed a singular prologue to the comedy he was about to perform. They announced to him that Beaulieu and Wurmser had no better fortune in Italy than the Archduke Charles upon the Rhine. That General Bonaparte, then twenty-six years of age, was taking posses-

sion of Italy, at the head of 36,000 Frenchmen, and was beating General Beaulieu, notwithstanding (and very probably on account of) his seventy-six years, though he had 50,000 men under his orders. They also warned the ambassador, that it was of the utmost importance to induce the Czarina to give effect to her promises so long since made, of placing an armament by sea and land at the disposal of the allies, and pressed him not to lose a moment in communicating this intelligence to the Empress, and in entering upon the question of the armament.

This order admitted of no delay in its execution; Count Cobentzel felt it, and I may say painfully. England was at this moment about to sign a treaty of subsidy and alliance with Russia; Austria was deeply interested in avoiding the smallest offence to England, and the Count felt that it would be an agreeable compliment to the British ambassador to consult him on this important occasion. Lord Whitworth was sent to and came. To form a just conception of this interview the two personages should be known. Lord Whitworth was tall, perfectly well made and handsome, with a countenance and manner of the highest distinction. I have never known a man better calculated to represent a nation great, prosperous, and impertinent; always magnificently dressed, even at the Consular Court, it may be imagined how particular he would be at that of Catherine II., where Eastern luxury prevailed to a magical extent. Imagine then the contrast he would present to the countenance, figure, and manners of M. de Cobentzel, always a little burlesque, and decorated on this occasion for the amusement of the persons who witnessed the conversation in the absurd accoutrements of the Countess d'Escarbagnas. Lord Whitworth received the Count's communication with the cold politeness habitual to him, and recommending him not to keep the Empress waiting, went to apologize for a delay which admitted of no apology but the truth. I believe, though I am not quite sure of it, that the Empress, in her impatience to be informed more at length of the details of events of which the English ambassador could only give the outline, required the immediate presence of the Count von Cobentzel, who came in his gown, hoop, and puffs to the audience.

The Count Louis von Cobentzel, though really agreeable, was much less so than he would have been had he permitted his own good sense and information to direct his manners, instead of servilely copying those of Prince Kaunitz and Prince Potemkin, to both of whom he affected to bear a personal resemblance, and whose frivolity and morality, both of the school of Louis XV., he assumed, together with an exclusive predilection for the great world. This world was the court,

beyond the luminous circle of which all to him was chaos. His good sense, however, made him understand, that a generation had sprung up, in which were to be found names bearing a lustre of renown fully equal to that of heraldic blazonry. He knew this, but to his aristocratic ears the sound of the word citizen, applied to the head of the government, produced discord to all social harmony; and he could not reconcile himself to the necessity of addressing Madame Lannes without the title of Princess. He had talent, however, and was, as I have said, agreeable; he related multitudes of anecdotes about the court of Russia, all very amusing; that of the Countess d'Escarbagnas did not come from himself, but was told me at a later period by some Russians of Catherine's court, and by the Count's cousin, Count Philip von Cobentzel, who very soon succeeded him as ambassador at Paris, and remained here till our rupture with the Austrians in 1804.

It was also in the year 1801 that a treaty of peace was signed at Florence between France and Naples. It is worthy of remark, that in this treaty the Isle of Elba was made over to France, although not as an object of much consideration, for it was always regarded as a barren and savage rock; thirteen years later it became the only asylum of the monarch to whom it belonged.

CHAPTER LXXI.

The ambassador at the theatres—The Vaudeville—The Comédie Française—Fleury—Manners of 1801 and 1831—All superiority dangerous—The Duke of Orleans and the blacksmith—Fleury, King of Prussia and the Count de Perigord in prison—Paul I. and General Sprengporten—Portrait of Madame Recamier—Gradual change in the state of society—The Banker's fetes—Foreigners in Paris—Death of the Emperor Paul and accession of Alexander—The Russians at Paris—The Chevalier de Kalitscheff and the Count de Markoff.

The Count Louis von Cobentzel was fond of laughing, especially when he was, as he called it, incognito; that is to say, when he left two dozen ribands and medals in his carriage, and retained but two or three; which with his black coat almost French, his silk stockings, diamond shoe-buckles and full-dressed head, made him a personage not very likely to diminish the merriment of such of the frequenters of the Montansier and the Vaudeville as should chance to meet him in the corridors. Our box at the Vaudeville having a private entrance and

staircase from the Rue de Chartres, made it particularly agreeable to the ambassador, and his frequent presence there was an additional attraction and amusement to us. In the years 1800, 1801 and 1802, the Vaudevilles resumed the gaiety which the stern events of the preceding years had greatly diminished; the song was resumed, and farce did not go to seek its subjects in Plutarch, Livy, or the State Trials. Pero and his friends, Scarron's marriage, and a thousand other such, were more suitable to this temple of gaiety, than the grand names, the very sound of which is sufficient to chase away mirth. At this moment the companies of the Vaudeville and the Théâtre de Montansier were particularly well chosen.

The *Comédie Française* was also in its glory. Talma, Lafont, St. Prix, Monvel—what an admirable constellation of talent! then Mademoiselle Raucourt, Madame Vestris, Monsieur Fleury, Mademoiselle Georges, Mademoiselle Duchesnois, Mademoiselle Volnais, and Mademoiselle Bourgoin; the recent *débuts* of the four last still divided the society of Paris into agitated factions; but greater than all these was Mademoiselle Mars, already the queen of comedy. Fleury was one of the performers at this theatre who pleased me best; I never heard him go through any character without giving it full effect, by his excellent judgment and good sense. Then his manners were those of a perfect gentleman, fully imbued with the *ton* of good company: not the affectation of the present day, or the manners which then belonged to the stable and the gingerbread-stall.

But I must speak of Fleury and of the triumph of his art in the character of Frederick in *The two Pages*. Many persons can yet remember the astonishment of Prince Henry, when he saw his brother upon the stage, speaking, walking, blowing his nose,—in all points Frederick himself. And that mask, as it may be called, with which at his pleasure he assumed another face, was wholly furnished by a play of the muscles altogether his own, and for which he was in no degree indebted to any theatrical manœuvre. This was proved to me in a singular manner by the Count de Perigord.

This nobleman was thrown into prison during the reign of terror, when not ostracism only, but imprisonment and death were frequently the reward of genius, as well as of aristocracy of whatever kind; even success in the lowest grades of life was not exempt. For example, the Duke of Orleans had for a companion in death, a blacksmith who had been denounced and condemned, because the president of his section was also a blacksmith, and hung fewer bells than his neighbour. The entire company of the *Comédie Française* were for similar reasons under lock and key, and M. de Perigord was painfully sur-

prised at meeting in prison so many persons who had contributed to his enjoyment in the days of happiness. But a Frenchman, it is well known, can be gay even in the presence of death, and the friend and companion of Marshal Saxe was not very likely to be otherwise. Every time, therefore, that the old Count met Fleury in the gloomy galleries of their prison, he stopped, made a low obeisance, and said, "How does your majesty do?" "At the instant," continued M. de Perigord, "the King of Prussia stood before me, such as we have seen him in *The two Pages*, such as he was at Potsdam two years before his death: his back bowed, but his carriage imposing nevertheless, the same air, and the same play of countenance. And this total change effected in a few seconds, in a damp dungeon, by the light of a grated casement, and when a turnkey might interrupt this dramatic entertainment by marching us before the revolutionary tribunal, that is to say,—to death!"

There is great talent, no doubt, in this active and ever ready play of the features and disguisement of the whole person; but I think the mental firmness of the man, which will permit him to exercise these faculties in the midst of the most imminent danger, is still more worthy of admiration than the powers of the actor.

The Austrian embassy was not the only one which at this period enlivened Paris; the Emperor of Russia, if he had not an actual representative at the Consular Court, had at least a medium of communication with the First Consul in the person of General Sprengporten. Charmed with the generosity with which Napoleon had treated Russia, in sending home without ransom or exchange, well clothed and provided for, the eight thousand prisoners taken at Alkmaar, on the surrender of the Anglo-Russian army, Paul had charged General Sprengporten with a letter of thanks to the First Consul, but without giving him any diplomatic character.*

This general gave charming fêtes; and though himself of a disposition habitually melancholy, arising from his exile from his native

* General Sprengporten was not a Russian, but born in Finland, of an ancient family. At the period of the famous revolution in Sweden, in 1776, he was much attached to the cause of Gustavus III., who, aware of the strict honour and fidelity of his military friend, made him acquainted with his plans, but Sprengporten arrived at Stockholm too late to assist the young king; the *chapeaux* had beaten the *bonnets*, and Gustavus was the conqueror. Sweden was at that period divided into two parties; the *bonnets* were supported by the Diet, and the *chapeaux*, encouraged by France, were of the King's party. Sprengporten afterwards passed into the Russian service, and although not ambassador at Paris, he was treated and listened to as such.

country, to which his engagements in the Russian service were a bar to his ever returning, he so frankly testified his desire to see his guests well amused that it was impossible to avoid being so. He was moreover a bachelor, and this circumstance contributed to the freedom of intercourse and mirth which his house offered.

It was here that I first saw Madame Recamier; I had heard her much spoken of, and I acknowledge that my mother had prejudiced my judgment concerning her, in persuading herself, and consequently me (for in matters relating to society, my opinion almost always followed hers), that Madame Recamier's reputation was wholly exaggerated, and that she must necessarily be a person of such overbearing pretensions, that no moderate qualifications could expect any notice in presence of her noisy and senseless appropriation of the homage of fashion.

Great then was my surprise when I beheld that lovely face, so blooming, so childish, and yet so beautiful! and still greater when I observed the timid uneasiness she experienced in her triumph. No doubt, it was pleasing to be proclaimed the unrivalled beauty of the fête; but it was evident that she was pained by the envious glances of the females, who could not wholly suppress the ill-will with which they witnessed her monopoly of adoration.

Madame Recamier truly deserved that homage; she was a really pretty woman! This praise is bestowed on every young woman with a passable face, whom it is necessary to flatter at her entrance into life, because she has a fortune, and the house to which she belongs is open to company; and thus is a word profaned which is destined to describe the most ravishing of nature's works. It would be more reasonable to say of such a person—she is handsome. Nothing is more vulgar than those everyday faces with great eyes, a strait nose, a mouth with good teeth and rosy lips, and all this accompanied by falling shoulders, and a well made leg and arm. But go and ask those large eyes for a look of fire, those lips to open with an intellectual smile, and that Greek or Roman nose to derange its solemn line to show by the smallest movement of the nostrils that that fine face can exhibit a play of the muscles; ask all this, and you may find a beautiful marble statue, but how silent and cold.

This requisite Madame Recamier possessed in perfection; the expression of her eyes is mild and intellectual, her smile is gracious, her language attaching; her whole person possesses the charm of native grace, goodness, and intelligence. She reminded me at first sight of the Madonnas of the pious Italian painters; but the resemblance consisted wholly in expression—not in regularity of features.

It was the mind which animated her eyes, and blushed in her cheek; the smile which so frequently played upon her rosy lips expressed the unaffected joy of a young heart, happy in pleasing, and in being beloved. When Madame Recamier was in England, she excited the same enthusiasm in the multitude who thronged to see her, because there is in grace and goodness a charm which exercises its power, without appeal, over the people of every country.

At the time when I first met Madame Recamier she was in the prime of her beauty and of her brilliant existence. M. Recamier was at the head of one of the first banking houses of Paris; his misfortunes were not then foreseen. He had, therefore, the means of giving to his charming consort all the enjoyments of wealth and luxury, as a poor return for her tender attentions, and the happiness which she shed over his home and his life. M. Recamier's house was a delightful residence; nothing was comparable to the fêtes he gave to foreigners recommended to him, and whose choice of M. Recamier for their banker, was no doubt fixed by the desire of an introduction to his wife. Curiosity attracted them to his house, they were retained there by a charm which acted equally upon old and young, male and female.

Madame Recamier is an essential character in cotemporary memoirs; it is not often that a woman is to be found to embellish the era of her life, with attractions such as hers; a woman whose friendship has been courted by persons the most remarkable of the age for their talents; a woman whose beauty has thrown at her feet all the men whose eyes have once been set upon her; whose love has been the object of universal desire, yet whose virtue has remained pure; whose unsullied reputation never suffered from the attacks of jealousy or envy; a woman who lost none of the affections which had been pledged to her, because in her days of gaiety and splendour she had the merit of being always ready to sacrifice her own enjoyments to afford consolation, which no one could do more sweetly and effectually, to any friend in affliction. To the world Madame Recamier is a celebrated woman; to those who had the happiness to know and to appreciate her, she was a peculiar and gifted being, formed by Nature as a perfect model in one of her most beneficent moods.

The epoch of which we are now speaking was remarkable, as ushering in a century of which the first twelve years furnished more events, than the whole circle of centuries which have formed the history of nations.

Since the 18th Brumaire, society had been reuniting, and grouping round a government which offered it, at length, not only security but

prosperity. The peace with Germany, that which was in progress with Russia, and a preliminary treaty already far advanced with Great Britain, afforded a bright horizon, to replace those thick clouds which weighed upon the bosoms even of individuals, oppressing all with fears, not only for their possessions but their lives. Such a change in the state necessarily produced a revolution in manners and in the relations of society. For the benefit of a part of the existing generation, of the rising part especially, it is proper to observe that good society, or the world of fashion, was, at the time to which we allude, a kingdom within itself, having its own laws, customs, usages, and even language; and all this without any prejudice to its neighbours. Women were the sovereigns of this empire, and the homage they exacted from their subjects was the just return for the charm they shed upon all social intercourse subject to their administration. All this had suffered greatly in the general overthrow. Beautiful women had assumed the red cap; but in the vaunted days of liberty, the liberty of changing one's style or character was not permitted. But as in this world every thing has an end, happily this glorious period of liberty had its end. Families again began to meet at stated festivals, to kiss the hand of the aged grandmother; they no longer feared to march in procession to the mother's room with bouquets of flowers on the day of Our Lady, or the patron saint; in time we got bolder, and private balls were renewed; at length came the Consulate, and we were commanded to amuse ourselves. Oh! how willingly was the command obeyed! And when we no longer feared to be condemned to death for having unwittingly danced on the anniversary of a defeat, and that the government set the example of gaiety, Paris once more became the abode of joy and pleasures. In the two first years of the Consulate the finest fetes, except those of the government, the ministers, and other authorities, were given by the richest bankers, as M. Recamier, M. Perregaux, and two or three others; then followed M.M. Seguin, Hainguerlot, and other great fortunes, who returned to France in pleasures the wealth she had bestowed upon them.

These fêtes were soon rendered more brilliant by the presence of numerous foreigners of distinction, who crowded into France as soon as they were permitted to travel. Italy, England, Switzerland, sent their contributions of visitors, who, in exchange for the gold with which they enriched us, were taught the arts of refined entertainment.

The Russians followed the Germans as soon as their new Sovereign gave them permission to quit their frozen regions. The Emperor Paul was just dead; and Alexander, the eldest of his sons,

had mounted the throne at twenty-three years of age. The despotic domination of the Czars immediately gave place to a paternal government, as much wiser as it was more gentle. I remember that at this period the Russians who came to Paris cherished for their young Sovereign a sentiment bordering on delirium. Many of them kept his portrait in their inmost apartment, beside that of the favourite saint, surrounded like it with lights and gems, and as much venerated as St. Alexander Newsky, or St. Nicholas.

Our definitive arrangements with the Court of St. Petersburgh, however, did not proceed very rapidly. M. Sprengporten was recalled and replaced by the Chevalier de Kalitscheff, who also had no diplomatic quality, but was simply the bearer of a letter from the Emperor of Russia to the First Consul. One remarkable circumstance attached to his mission was that, though sent by the Emperor Paul, before he could deliver his letter the throne was already filled by Alexander. He was soon succeeded by the Count de Markoff, in quality of minister plenipotentiary, which however he did not assume till two months after his arrival here. General Hédouville was appointed by the First Consul to reside at St. Petersburgh, in the same quality: all arrangements of this nature were made with extreme caution; the foreign powers feared even to form alliances with France, for the Directory had rendered them suspicious of our good intentions.

CHAPTER LXXII.

A visit from Rapp—An invitation to Malmaison—Conversation on the route—Rapp's attachment to the First Consul—Chagrin and melancholy of Bonaparte—Uneasiness of his two aides-de-camp—Bonaparte refuses his breakfast—A ride on horseback and fear of assassins—The horses at full gallop—Deep affliction of the First Consul, and his conversation with Junot—A dinner at Malmaison—The loss of Egypt—Great projects overthrown—The intended pillar—The action of Nazareth—An order of the day the proudest title of nobility—The picture and the portrait.

One fine morning in the summer of 1801, Rapp joined our breakfast table, bringing an order to Junot to attend the First Consul at Malmaison, and an invitation to me to spend the day there. We set out immediately after breakfast, and as Rapp was returning to Malmaison we gave him a place in our carriage.

I have already spoken of Rapp as a brave and frank soldier, but the quality which acted the most strongly upon his character at this moment was his ardent attachment to the First Consul. Rapp, Duroc, Lannes, Bessières, Lemarrois, and two or three others of the army of Italy and Egypt, sympathized perfectly with Junot in this respect, and spoke precisely the same language. The First Consul was to them as an adored mistress is to most young men, the thought which predominated over every other; and of this devoted attachment I shall have many proofs to produce as my Memoirs proceed.

On this occasion we remarked that Rapp was thoughtful, and that a strong feeling seemed to oppress him. We had scarcely reached the barrière de l'Etoile, when Junot, who had been contemplating Rapp's countenance, caught the reflection of its melancholy, and before we arrived at Nanterre, he said to his brave brother-in-arms taking his hand:

"Rapp, there is something the matter yonder. . . . . the General———"

And his eye, fixed upon the excellent young man, seemed to fear a confirmation of his apprehensions. Rapp, at first, bowed his head without answering; then pressing Junot's hand, "I know nothing," he said; "but the General has certainly received some painful news. I know him as if I had spent my whole life by his side, and when his forehead wrinkles and his eyelids fall" . . . . here he knit his eyebrows as Napoleon was accustomed to do when deep in thought. "Then when retaining this melancholy air, he pushes away his plate at dinner, throws up his napkin, removes his chair, walks to and fro, and orders three cups of coffee an hour hence, I say to myself that he has met with some cause of distress. This is the life he led all day yesterday, and this morning the same course has recommenced. This is why I am returning to Malmaison, though my attendance ended at noon. But I should be miserable at Paris."

Junot pressed Rapp's hand: the brave fellow had so entirely expressed his own feelings! I looked at both of them; Junot's eyes were wet, and Rapp was looking out of the coach window, ashamed of his emotion.

"But," said I to them, "give me leave to tell you, you are behaving like two children. What! because the First Consul is, perhaps, out of humour, or, at the most, because you believe him to be vexed, you are unhappy to a degree to be absolutely ashamed of your feelings: I repeat it, you are as unreasonable as two children."

Their two faces turned towards each other, to take a mutual sur-

vey; and I burst into a laugh. Rapp was offended. "I may be ridiculous in expressing an over-anxiety," said he, "but I who have seen the General's altered physiognomy . . . . you know, Junot, I who have seen him, know that it is not ill-humour:—it is grief. Yesterday morning, after rising from breakfast, which he had not eaten, he ordered the horses, and we rode out to the park of Bougival. We were alone with Jardin; so long as we were within sight of the house, the General walked his horse: but we had no sooner passed the paling than he spurred it, and the poor beast galloped up the stony road of Bougival, where he might have been killed ten times over: for if the horse had stumbled upon one of the round and polished stones the hill is strewed with, he might have rolled to the bottom, without the possibility of being saved. When we reached the summit, there, under the fine trees at the entrance of the wood, he stopped short. The horse panted and could not advance a step. I rode up to the General: he was alone: Jardin was still a long way behind. I then thought no more of the horse falling; but I beheld in the dark and desert wood, assassins in waiting to watch my General's steps. I saw that the most devoted guardianship cannot be so active but that danger may outstrip it; he had been there two minutes and alone! The misfortunes which might have been accomplished in this short time presented themselves so forcibly to me that, for a moment, I forgot myself. I took the liberty to tell the First Consul that he rode like a madman, and did not know what he was about. "Why the devil, my General," said I, "do you terrify those who are devoted to you, in this manner?"

"What! you spoke to him in that manner!" said Junot, laughing, but with a look of astonishment.

"Certainly," replied Rapp, "and why should I not? You all try to frighten me out of speaking frankly to the First Consul; but I cannot believe it would displease him: he knows when the heart speaks." Rapp accompanied this speech with a collection of energetic words which may be dispensed with here. His language had nothing vulgar in it, but he often introduced into it interjections and exclamations, to which it would be difficult to do justice in writing. "But to return to what I was saying just now about the General, when I pointed out to him the solitude which surrounded us, he smiled, so. . . . ." And Rapp smiled with an expression of disdain and bitterness, at the same time inclining his head in a manner altogether peculiar to Napoleon, and which those only who have known him well can figure to themselves or understand. "Then he said to me: 'Danger has no terrors for me, Colonel Rapp; there are even moments when I court it, for

some days of my life are heavy to bear.' And thereupon he recommenced his furious gallop, but this time, if we were not in a level country, at least, the road was such that it was practicable to follow him. Jardin and I did not let him outride us, but kept our horses close on the heels of his. We rode in this manner, six leagues, I think; however, on our return, the First Consul seemed much more calm than when we set out."

Junot was thoughtful. All that Rapp had said did indeed indicate that some great trouble affected the First Consul. Junot questioned his comrade, but Rapp, who could easily remark the emotion which the countenance of Napoleon exhibited, was wholly deficient in that fine discrimination which could trace such emotion to its cause. I was perfectly astonished at the style, almost of eloquence, in which he had just related the particulars of his preceding day's ride, and I recognised in it a new proof that the eloquence of the heart is the most poetic; that of genius, when compared with it, appears cold and formal. One word shot from that volcano of the mind when agitated by passion, whatever its nature, is always more persuasive and more eloquent than all the discourses of a rhetorician.

When we arrived at Malmaison, the First Consul was in his cabinet. He immediately sent for Junot; who, for above an hour, was closeted with him. Some time before dinner we saw them walking in the alley which leads towards Jonchére* and Bougival. Junot was serious and seemed to listen with great attention to the First Consul. Sometimes the countenance of Napoleon became animated; once he stopped opposite the house, and as if he would explain demonstratively to Junot what he was saying, he traced some figures with his feet upon the sand, and probably finding this mode insufficient to his purpose, asked Junot for his sword, and, without drawing it from the scabbard, used it to trace his explanatory figures with more ease.

When we entered the dining room, the First Consul was already at table; he placed me by his side, and talked of things so entirely indifferent, that it was manifest he was supporting a conversation to which he gave no attention at all, only to avoid the awkwardness of total silence. I examined him narrowly, and was convinced that he was under the influence of a strong impression. Alas! the subject was but too serious; we had lost Egypt! He had hoped that his good fortune would have preserved in Egypt the ascendancy over the evil star of the unlucky Menou; and the English ministry, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and Lord Grenville, terrified at the success of the man they

* A country-house which afterwards belonged to Eugène.

detested, had given in their resignations; in vain—their adieu to power was but the fatal warrant which doomed to death the great work of his hands. Abercromby's expedition augured great mischief to Egypt, particularly under this skilful chief; but with him who directed at once the government and the army it was ruin and death; for he brought both to the strand of Aboukir.

In returning to Paris, Junot was strongly affected. He told me all he had learned from the First Consul; and how much he was himself distressed in seeing the affliction which weighed upon a great mind whose every sentiment was powerful and ardent.

"It is so long," said Junot, "since I have known his projects with respect to Egypt! When we walked upon the Boulevards Neufs on one of those fine summer evenings which then afforded us all the pleasure we enjoyed; when we were at Paris, unhappy, and unemployed, then it was that the First Consul spoke to me of the East, of Egypt, Mount Libanos, and the Druses; and when these brilliant reveries subsequently became a glorious reality, when General Bonaparte saw in his own hands the power of executing such important projects, I know that he considered it the finest moment of his life. I know not what Heaven may have in store for him; but I may affirm that to constitute Egypt the station from whence, at some future day, the blow should be struck which should annihilate the prosperity of England, was his most cherished purpose, and was about to receive its accomplishment. When, then, he said to me to-day, 'Junot, we have lost Egypt!'* I felt all the pain with which he would receive the intelligence that Egypt was actually lost: and my heart throbbed with anguish. Rapp was right! my General suffered cruelly yesterday!"

The First Consul did not express to those who surrounded him the deep wound which England had thus inflicted on his heart. Junot alone understood his sufferings; and he wept like a child while he repeated to me all that had passed during the two hours he had been alone with the First Consul. Not only had Napoleon, during this conference, spoken like a patriot and wept over the irreparable loss which the commerce and prosperity of France had sustained, but he

* It is very necessary, in order to understand the ulterior objects of Napoleon, with respect to his advance upon India after he should have conquered Egypt, to read the instructions given by him to M. de Lascaris, which are to be found in M. de Lamartine's "Pilgrimage to the Holy Land," vol. iii., page 145. The account here alluded to was drawn up by the latter from the papers of M. de Lascaris, and furnishes ample proofs of the gigantic mind of Napoleon: the whole of this relation is highly interesting.

had felt as the chief of the army, and the friend of his soldiers. He regretted the land which the blood of thousands of Frenchmen had enriched! those burning sands where their bones must wither! "He intended," said Junot, "to raise a monument to Sulkowsky, to Julien. . . . 'I would have erected, at the foot of Mount Tabor, a pillar on which the names of the three hundred brave men whom I commanded at Nazareth should be inscribed. We also should have braved ages, and posterity would have found our glory in the deserts of Syria'—but as my General said,"—continued Junot: 'My projects, and my dreams, England has destroyed them all.'"

Junot then described to me a plan which had hitherto only been sketched out, but which was about to receive its completion. At the time of the famous action of Nazareth, where Junot, cut off from the corps to which he belonged, found himself at the head of a few hundred men, opposed to the Grand Vizier's advanced guard of three thousand, commanded by Ayoub-Bey, and obtained a complete victory, one of the finest achievements in our wars, the General-in-chief immediately ordered that this victory should be consecrated in the most glorious manner. The Order of the Day, then issued, had not yet been executed, but the First Consul in terms the most affectionately honourable assured Junot that it should be forthwith. I here insert that Order of the Day; it is a noble trophy to preserve; my children are entitled to be vain of it. They have no cause to fear that their hereditary nobility should be contested, for they will always be the sons of the Conqueror of Nazareth.

At the Head-Quarters before Acre, 2 Floréal, Year 7.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

The General-in-chief, desirous of giving a mark of his particular satisfaction to the three hundred brave soldiers, commanded by General Junot, who in the action of Nazareth repulsed a Turkish corps of cavalry of three thousand men, took five standards and covered the field of battle with the dead bodies of the enemy; Orders:—

Art. 1. A medal of 12,000 francs shall be given as a prize to the best picture representing the action of Nazareth.

Art. 2. The costume of the French in the picture shall be the uniform of the 2d light infantry and the 14th dragoons. General Junot and the Chiefs of the Brigade Duvivier, and of the 14th dragoons, shall be represented in it.

Art. 3. The General Staff shall cause our artists in Egypt to draw the costumes of the Mamelukes, the Janissaries of Damascus

and Aleppo, the Maugrebins and the Arabs,* and shall send them to the minister of the interior, inviting him to cause copies of them to be executed and transmitted to the principal painters of Paris, Milan, Florence, Rome, and Naples, and to name the judges who shall award the prize and the period when it shall be announced.

Art. 4. The present Order of the Day shall be sent to the municipality of the commune of all the soldiers who shared in the action of Nazareth.

The General-in-chief,
BONAPARTE.

ALEXANDER BERTHIER,
General of Division, Chief of the Staff.

I believe, that this Order of the Day is unique in our wars. The Directory, which was not fond of acknowledging the glory of our arms, was necessitated to publish it, and directions were given that General Bonaparte's orders should be executed. The competition took place, after the return both of General Bonaparte and Junot, and the prize was adjudged to M. le Gross, who received orders for the picture, but never completed it. The magnificent portrait of the Duke of Abrantes, the immortal work I may call it of M. le Gros, was destined for this picture of the action of Nazareth. The portrait, of which the head, or rather the face, only is complete, is a chef-d'œuvre not only for the painting but the resemblance. How often has my heart thanked M. le Gros! How sacred and venerable are the creative arts, when they thus restore to an afflicted family that which it regrets! May the hand which has produced this prodigy be for ever blessed!

* These troops composed the Turkish corps opposed to Junot and his brave division.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Contemporary Memoirs—Mystification—The First Consul represses it—The Princess Dolgoroucky—Mystification of the Institute at her house—Robert—The Catacombs—The plank at St. Peter's.

One of the most important objects of contemporary memoirs is to stamp the epoch with its distinctive character; "Insert facts and names," say some persons incessantly, till they weary my patience; facts, what else should I insert? Names, they will attach themselves to facts; and it would be difficult to write memoirs without both. But the facts, as I observed before, which it is important to preserve, are those which mark the manners of the age. At this particular period, when strangers abounded in Paris, a fashion existed, which, in its various ramifications, served for the daily amusement of society. This was the art of mystification, *anglice* hoaxing, which had just sprung up amongst us. To make game of one's friends, was an amusement of old standing; but now, for the first time, men made the art of mystification, as it was called, a profession, a regular means of livelihood: for example, an entertainment was to be provided in the best manner for a party of friends; M. or Madame N. must be mystified; but how? Send for Musson, Thiémé, or Legras; it was done with the same ease that you would send to Corcelet,* the Chevet of that day, for a truffled turkey.

But there existed a more general species of mystification, in which a whole party were made actors, and that without the help of the inimitable Musson; I am about to give a special instance of this kind presently. The First Consul, who detested this diversion, was the cause of its falling into desuetude, by the expression of his displeasure. Junot and I were once warmly reprimanded by him for having caused the mystification of a man by the whole audience of a theatre, without any participation of intention on the part of the spectator-actors. But the scene which I am now about to relate, especially concerns the Russian Princess Dolgoroucky, who arrived in Paris at the time when these follies were still rife, though fear of

* Corcelet is still well known at Paris, but the shop of Chevet is more visited by the epicureans.

the First Consul had rendered them less frequent than they had once been.

This lady was by far the most distinguished amongst the Russians at Paris, for her qualifications of person, mind, and manners. She was called impertinent, but as I never found her so, I can say nothing upon that subject; she was certainly stiff, with some bombast, and more affectation; but her manners were nevertheless those of the best society. She was polite, but distant; she never conferred an obligation without hesitating; at a first introduction she curtsied even without smiling, nor was it till she was certain of finding the person that pleased her that she advanced graciously to offer her hand. She was thought handsome by some, because she was tall and finely formed; but this striking figure was surmounted by a countenance of harshness and severity, almost repulsive. La Harpe, the Abbé Delille, and others of our literati, held her in high respect, and the superiority of her intellectual acquirements could not be denied; from all this resulted the reputation not only of a witty, but of a learned lady;—the character in the world the most alarming. Some young people, or perhaps some ladies, wearied and annoyed by the ceremonious airs of the noble stranger, whose haughtiness was ill-placed in a country where liberty, and especially equality, were at that moment in their verdure and activity, determined to make her the subject of a mystification. Her pretensions as a *bel-esprit* were well known, and were made the test of the drama.*

The Princess occupied a very small house in the Faubourg St. Honoré, where she could not dine more than eight or ten persons; if she wished to entertain twenty, she was obliged to invite them to tea. The Princess returned home one afternoon, about five o'clock, much fatigued by a traveller's visits to the curiosities of Paris, and had just taken up a reclining position upon a sofa, when the folding-doors of her drawing-room opened, and her groom of the chambers announced M. de Lacépède.

M. de Lacépède would have been heartily welcome to me or to any of my friends, because we were personally acquainted with him; but the Princess had never seen him, and notwithstanding her learned reputation, it is by no means sure that she had read any of his works. Be this as it may, there he was; and as he was the politest of men, the compliments of the *entrée* went off very well. The gentleman was not under the smallest embarrassment, but the lady thought the hour he had chosen for his visit a somewhat strange one. A few

* This lady was daughter of the Princess of Nassau-Usingen.

minutes however only elapsed before the door was opened again to admit M. de Lalande. He was presently followed by M. Suard. At length, in about a quarter of an hour, the most respectable members of the Institute, the greatest strangers to the world of fashion, from the solitude to which their scientific studies confined them, were all assembled in the Princess Dolgoroucky's little drawing-room, except indeed those who happened to be acquainted with the hostess, whose situation was every moment becoming more uneasy from the increasing number of her singular visitors. This was, however, neither the place nor the occasion for the exhibition of those stately airs which disconcert inferiors. The Princess had sense, and though incapable of understanding the extraordinary situation in which she found herself, she perfectly understood that she was at home, and whatever might be the cause of this truly eccentric meeting, it was for her to prove that her humour was not always so disagreeable as was reported. The conversation, nevertheless, became more and more difficult to sustain. One of the learned visitors had raised a discussion respecting some ivory fossils which had been found, I know not where; and referred continually to the Princess, who was equally at a loss how to answer, or where to hide her head. At length a familiar face presented itself to her notice; her friend Millin was announced.

"So," said he to the Princess, kissing her hand with as much respect as if she had been the favourite Sultana; "so, it is by a singular accident only that I have heard of the scientific treasures and rare curiosities you have received from your northern estates! I, the most faithful, the most devoted of your servants! Oh, Princess, Princess!"

She looked at him with amazement; at length obtained from him, rapidly, and in an under-tone, an explanation of the whole mystery; and learnt that two days before, the most distinguished members of the Institute, the elect, in fact, from every section of the most abstracted and the most learned, had each received an invitation in his own proper and private name, to dine with her. A note appended to the invitation informed him, moreover, that some most curious objects of natural history had been sent to her from her estates in Siberia, and which she not only desired to submit to the examination of the most scientific men in France, but proposed to offer to their acceptance. Not another word was wanting to attract the attention of the whole learned body. The division of one of M. Demidoff's mines would not have tempted these minds devoted to science and learning; but the possibility of possessing a true moon-stone, the

carcass, or even a rib of a fossil elephant, had drawn these talented men from their retreat. M. de Lacépède had missed the single hour's sleep he allowed himself each day while engaged on one of his great works, in the hope of seeing some skin, or some delicate bone which he might recognize as the spoil of one of those superb serpents a hundred and eighty feet in length, which overran the world some twenty-five thousand years ago.

Millin had not seen these invitations, for the authors of the hoax had taken good care not to send them to the acquaintances of the Princess; but he having met M. de Lalande at the Tuileries, had learnt from him that there was to be a scientific meeting at the Princess Dolgoroucky's, together with its cause; he wondered much that he had been forgotten, but fortunately determined, nevertheless, to make one of the party.

The result of this explanation by M. Millin was, the discovery that the Princess had been hoaxed, a matter of serious concern to one who thought so much of the observations which might be made upon her; but she parried it with all the show of indifference she could assume, and followed the excellent advice of Millin, to retire for a week or two into the country. Her friends had more wit than to undertake the refutation of the story; one of the most ill-judged proceedings imaginable, unless supported by incontestable proofs. The learned men implicated in the transaction, when the true state of the case came to be whispered among them, sneaked one by one out of the house, and *restaurateurs* being by no means so numerous as at present, they found some difficulty in procuring a dinner at six o'clock in the evening. Aware of the ridicule to which they were exposed, (and who so sensible to ridicule as such men?) they took care to be silent, and thus the matter dropped, forgotten in ten days as every thing is at Paris, unless supported by a prolonged disputation; and this adventure, which never gained much credit, was nearly unknown, and entirely failed to effect the purpose of its contrivers. After a while, it was formally denied, but was perfectly true nevertheless.

"The dignity of science was somewhat compromised," said old Robert, who was as ready in conversation as at his easel, "this affair would have made a good subject for the pencil;" and, in fact, the interior of the drawing-room, with the perplexity of the hostess, and the dismayed countenances of her guests, when they found that neither serpents, elephants, nor dinner were forthcoming, would have made a pleasant scene.

This Robert was an excellent old man; he had an affectionate friendship for me, which I cordially returned. He was a man of in-

telligence; had seen much, and retained much, and his judgment being good, his conversation was extremely attractive. It is he who was the hero of that adventure so famous in the annals of the French Academy at Rome, and which has furnished the text to M. Delille's fine poetical episode of the Catacombs.* But how cold and colourless, how devoid of interest are those verses, in comparison of the rapid and animated narration I received from Robert's own lips, when at seventy-nine years of age, sitting by my fireside, he related the peril he had run in studying the frescos in the catacombs of St. Sebastian at Rome, from having lost the thread which guided him through the intricacies of those prodigious vaults!† With what simple, yet glowing, because heartfelt eloquence, did this old man portray the horrors of the youth of twenty creeping for two days in living agony, among the stones from which he had been copying, in search of a ball of thread! His remembrance of the mother he was to see no more, of his country, and of that glorious futurity of which the imagination of a youthful artist had dreamt, and before which a leaden curtain was falling! Then comes physical suffering with its overwhelming force; he is hungry, he is in pain, in torture!——But what words can paint the delirium of his joy, when by accidentally dropping his hand upon a heap of bones it feels his guardian ball! The words with which he described that moment could be used only by himself.

Soon after this adventure of the catacombs he fell again, and by his own fault, into a danger equally imminent, but less known. He was one day in St. Peter's church, after the hour of prayer, alone, contemplating, in the calmness of solitude, the thousand wonders of the Christian giant. Suddenly he saw a cord descend from an opening in the cupola: a workman approached it, fastened to it a bucket full of water, and the cord was drawn up again. He perceived that they were mending the roof, and was seized with a desire to mount the cupola.

"I was curious," said he, "to see what harm had befell this colossus of modern architecture, which, rearing its head into the air, seems to deride the ruined monuments which surround it, saying to them, '*I am eternal!*' Its pride seemed to me to be greatly abated, for this cord, this bucket, this solitary workman, appeared so insignificant: I was no longer afraid, but determined to go up to discover what was the matter."

He mounted accordingly; and having reached the summit, was at first seized with admiration at sight of the prospect which lay extended

* It is, in his poem, entitled "*l'Imagination.*"

† Robert is well known as a painter of ruins: he found his ball of twine only on the second day, which enabled him to trace his way out of the Catacombs.

before him; a magnificent, but living panorama, illuminated by that sun to which no other can compare; enveloping all nature with that veil of golden hue which floats only on the buildings, the trees, the fields of Italy. Then looking round nearer to him, he saw some masons and tilers, repairing, as they sang in their monotonous and nasal tones, some damage the roof had sustained. For the greater facility of bringing up the water they had tied two long planks together, fixed them across the opening in the dome, and from them, by means of a cord and bucket, drew up the water; the two planks might be about two feet and a half in width, and the whole apparatus being intended only to support the bucket of water, no one concerned himself about its strength.

Eyes of twenty years see danger only to laugh at and brave it; it came into Robert's head that the appearance of St. Peter, looking down upon it from above, must be very extraordinary; and the fancy soon became an ardent desire that Robert felt compelled to satisfy, without considering that the plank which he proposed to use as a bridge, crossed an aperture three hundred feet from the ground. He set first one foot upon it, then the other, and presently behold him on this frail pathway without the possibility of turning back.

When Robert related this history to me, at the moment of his launching upon this plank, where my imagination represented him suspended between the sky and that marble which seemed destined to break his head, I was seized with the same vertigo that threatened him in his insane course; we gathered round him, listening eagerly to his words and following him step by step on his aerial bridge.

"Having reached about a third part across, I became desirous," said he, "of enjoying the spectacle I had set my mind upon, and cast my eyes downwards. Instantly a singing whizzed in my ears, a cloud first of blackness then of fire spread itself before my eyes. Fortunately I had the presence of mind to stop. I cannot describe what I felt at this moment in hearing close to me the most execrable imprecations murmured in an under-tone by the workmen. I reopened my eyes and determined to walk on, for I was convinced that if I remained another moment in my present situation I should die even without falling. I felt that my rescue depended upon myself, that my strength of mind alone could save me." He advanced with a firm step along this narrow plank, at the extremity of which he might recover a life at present so uncertain, when he felt it crack under his feet! he was now in the middle of the plank, and the weight of his body so much exceeding that of the small bucket of water, seemed

necessarily about to break it down and precipitate him to the marble floor. A young man looking on with affright, heard the crash, and exclaimed, "The plank is rotten, the poor fellow must——." He did not finish the sentence, for the master mason laid his hand upon his mouth and pressed it violently. Meanwhile Robert proceeded, and at length stepped upon a solid footing. He looked behind him, saw the plank, the gulf, the death he had escaped, and throwing himself upon his knees returned thanks to God.

"Oh! my friends," said he to the workmen, "how fortunate I have been!" But instead of sympathising in his joy, the workmen laid hold of him and beat him so violently that he cried out for help. "You provoking Frenchman, rascal, torment," bawled out the masons in chorus. "You have frightened us out of our senses," and the blows continuing to pour upon his back, Robert thought he should go mad. "Will you leave me alone?" cried he, half laughing and half angry. "Ouf," said the master mason, "I can scarcely breathe yet!"—"And why," said Robert, "did you shut that poor child's mouth?"—"By St. Peter! would you have had me let him cry on till he had made you lose what little reason you had left?"

Robert took the mason's hand and pressed it with real and cordial friendship; this rough frankness, expressing such strong interest, however strange the mode of testifying it, went straight to the heart, and affected it perhaps more deeply than the most ceremonious expressions of interest uttered by a man of the world. Robert saw this man frequently during his stay at Rome, and painted two pictures for him, one of which was a sketch of this event, and I believe has been engraved, but I am not sure.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Lessons of elocution—Mysterious visit—Ride to Issy—Mademoiselle Clairon's house—A waiting-maid's costume—Mademoiselle Clairon at eighty years of age—Extraordinary dress—The bust of Voltaire—The monologue of Electra—Mademoiselle Clairon and Talma—The Queen of Babylon without bread—M. de Staël—Mademoiselle Clairon relieved by the government—She does justice to Mademoiselle Mars—Nightly sound of a pistol-shot.

HAD performed in comedy with my young friends before my marriage, and not only had the study of poetical literature formed a part of my drawing-room education, but I had also been taught to

recite. I had received lessons in elocution from M. Laurent, and had even had some lessons from Larive, when we occasionally met him at St. Mandé, at the house of a friend to whom he was related. But I had also had a very different mistress, if I may apply the term to the advice given on the subject of declamation to a young girl not destined for the theatre.

M. Brunetière, of whom I have often spoken, who was my guardian, and fulfilled to the utmost of his power the duties of the office, frequently took me into the country in his cabriolet when my fatiguing watchings in 1798 and 1799 were visibly injuring my health. We were not absent on these occasions, more than an hour or two, yet even this my mother thought long; and so did I, because I could not be easy unless I was beside her to see that the thousand and one fancies, which as soon as formed became necessary to her comfort, were complied with.

M. Brunetière one day said to me, "I am going to take you to visit a very celebrated person; but I shall not tell you her name, you must guess it." Then inclining towards my mother he said some words to her in a whisper, adding aloud, "Will you give me leave to take her?"—"Most certainly I will, and gladly," she replied, and added, "Loulou, look at her, examine her closely, and tell me what impression the person you are going to see makes upon you."

We set off about noon, on a lovely day of spring, to take, as M. Brunetière called it, "A bath of air to refresh," said he, "that face of fifteen which is as pale as the one I am going to show you." And in truth I felt as we passed through the Bois de Boulogne and a part of the park of St. Cloud, that joy which the breezes of spring never fail to inspire after a tedious confinement in close air. We entered the village of Sèvres, and turning to the left reached Issy, which was to be the term of our journey.

We stopped before what had been a handsome house, but the dilapidated and neglected appearance of which greatly surprised me. I could not conceive how an aged woman could take up her lodging in a house which looked so desolate. The servant rang a long time without receiving any answer, except from seven or eight dogs, who performed counter-tenor, bass, and bass-tenor, in chorus, under the leading of a great mastiff in the court-yard, who acquitted himself admirably in his office of guard, barking according to order. An old woman at length appeared to let us in. The extraordinary style of her dress arrested my whole attention; it was so strange a mixture of old-fashioned French, with the Greek and Roman costume, that all the laws of politeness could scarcely restrain me from laughing at the old

femme-de-chambre. Her apron trimmed with festooned muslin, and ornamented with ribbon at the pockets, announced her quality of waiting-maid. On recognising M. de Brunetière, she uttered an exclamation of joy: "You are come at last! Oh! how pleased Mademoiselle will be! And Mademoiselle Alexandrina too, I suppose? How much she is like you! Dear young lady, you have a worthy papa. And to think that we have no fruit to offer the dear child!"

During this monologue M. Brunetière assisted me to alight from the cabriolet, and we crossed a small court, amid the clamorous yelpings of the dogs, whom the old woman beat with a switch, and M. de Brunetière wished them heartily at the devil.

At length we reached the apartment of the mistress, who proved to be a very old lady, notwithstanding the title of Mademoiselle given her by her servant. She had been a fine figure in her youth, and age had not yet robbed her of a particle of height; her hair, white, but unpowdered, was drawn up behind in the Grecian style, and formed in front a toupet, which showed a still noble forehead, and a brow corresponding to all the expressions of an eye, calm, but animated. The costume of this lady, whose air imposed respect at first sight, was as extraordinary as that of her *femme-de-chambre.* She wore a sort of muslin mantle, which did not hang as mantles usually do from the shoulders, but was folded round her in the form of antique drapery. A robe below it was shorter than the mantle; both were white and bordered with garlands of laurels.* The lady, at once singular and attractive, was seated in a large arm-chair, well lined with pillows, with a bear-skin under her feet, and a table covered with books before her. A bust of Voltaire of great beauty stood upon it, as did a portrait of Lekain; many other busts and portraits were hung round the room, or attached by brackets to the walls, which were barely covered by paper, dropping to pieces from the effects of damp. The desolation of the house seemed even more striking in this room, surrounding with its misery an aged female, who had evidently been accustomed to the indulgences of affluence.

On seeing M. Brunetière, far from expressing the joy her maid had promised, she bent her brow, compressed her lips in a manner I have never seen in any other person, and exclaimed, "Ah! ah! Monsieur, here you are then, at last! and where is your ambassador that he is not come also? He would have judged for himself of the condition of the asylum which is left to Electra, and to Semiramis."

* These dresses were much in fashion about 1795, and were printed at M. Oberkampf's manufactory at Joüy.

So saying, she raised her arm in a theatrical manner, pointing towards a part of the ceiling, through which the water was falling into the parlour, though it was on the ground floor. "So!" she continued with an accent impossible to describe, "M. le Baron de Staël still fails in his word, his plighted oath! And why, sir, why do not you, who know what his engagements to me are, oblige him to fulfil them, for in fact, sir, it even rains in my room."

I looked at, and listened attentively to this woman, as singular in her speech as in her costume, yet experienced no inclination to laugh, nor the smallest idea of ridiculing her. I even felt much pain at hearing her complaints of ill-usage. M. Brunetière, who was no way to blame in the affair, approached her, kissed her hand with an air of respect which seemed to soften her, and presenting me to her by name, said, "Her mother is a Commena." The old lady endeavoured to stand up, but could not. "Mademoiselle," said she, "I knew your father and your uncle well; they both did me the honour of visiting me. I am rejoiced to see you. Permit me——" And taking my hand she kissed my forehead, with a solemnity which made M. de Brunetière smile. I was dying with impatience to know the name of this remarkable person, who, surrounded by evidences of poverty, and herself giving the idea of the ruin of a superior nature, inspired me with an indefinable species of respect. My guardian at length took pity upon me.

"You see that Mademoiselle Clairon is surrounded by objects worthy of herself and her glorious recollections," said he, pointing to the busts of Voltaire and Lekain.

But my eye did not follow the direction of his hand; it fixed immediately upon the person whose name I had just learnt. Mademoiselle Clairon! so famous, so admirable in the parts of Electra, Aménaïde, Idamé, Semiramis! the woman sung by Voltaire, praised by all Europe! there I saw her, almost eighty years of age, in a state bordering on destitution, and apparently accusing, as the author of her misfortunes, a man whose name should have been a guarantee that talent in distress would have found protection from him. I looked at her, and my eye probably expressed a part of my thoughts; for taking my hand with that of hers which she was able to use (the other was paralytic), she said to me, "Yes, my dear young lady, it is Clairon that you see. I am the woman whom Voltaire thanked for the success of his pieces; I am the woman whom all Europe came to hear pronounce the fine verses of that immortal genius." And she bowed to the bust of Voltaire. "My country," she added, with a bitter smile, "has been grateful and liberal in

praises, and has given me many laurels." Again she directed her hand towards the bust of Voltaire, and I observed, for the first time, that it was surrounded by emblematic crowns, numerous papers, and a thousand other trifles, all of which Mademoiselle Clairon had probably received during her long theatrical career. "I have offered to him," said the actress, "all the fruits of my success; it is to the master that the pupil owes all her credit." And elevating herself in her seat with theatrical dignity, she rehearsed an Ode, addressed by Voltaire to herself, in which, far from recognizing Mademoiselle Clairon's observations, he thanked her for the success of his works. "But he did not believe a word of all that," she said, with a smile of intelligence; "and he was right." She possessed, nevertheless, a degree of vanity, of which it is difficult to form an idea.

My guardian, seeing how much Mademoiselle Clairon interested me, begged her to recite some passages from one of her favourite parts: she considered for a moment, and then commenced the fine monologue of Electra, which she went through with admirable talent. I know not whether at this day we should consider her performance so perfect, but I was delighted, and promised myself many visits to Issy with my guardian. She was fond of conversation, and supported it with grace; her language was chaste, and she professed a profound contempt for all innovations upon the ancient manners. She told us that there was a good little man, named Talma, who had the audacity to give himself out as her pupil. "I know not how he performs," said she, "but that is of no consequence to me. I have sent a message to that miserable successor of Fréron, who leaves neither the living nor the dead in peace, desiring him to put into his papers that I never gave lessons to M. Talma."—"But he has great talent," said I, timidly, for I was overpowered by her royal air. "Oh! I do not contest that," said she, politely, but in that tone of voice which seems to say,—I pay no attention to your opinion. I know that she afterwards heard Talma, and was enraptured with his performance; also, that she gave him some advice which he profited by.

In taking leave of Mademoiselle Clairon, I begged permission to visit her again, which she granted with the utmost graciousness; adding, "Make my most profound respects to your mother.—I had the honour of seeing her when she first came to Paris in her Greek dress: she was a star of beauty!"

M. Brunetière, at parting, approached Mademoiselle Clairon, and put into her hands a rouleau; at the same time saying something to her very low, to which she answered aloud, "This comes in good time, for the baker would no longer furnish bread to the Queen of

Babylon. But you are a worthy man. Mademoiselle,"—and she addressed herself to me, showing the rouleau M. Brunetière had just given her; "do you see this money; your guardian gives it out of his own purse, that poor Clairon may not die of hunger. He gives it for that man who is without principle, that ambassador, that husband of a celebrated woman, in short, for M. the Baron de Staël, who suffers the water of the sky to find its way into my poor habitation."

M. de Staël had purchased an estate of Mademoiselle Clairon; the deeds stipulated that the house in which she resided at Issy, should be kept in repair at his expense. Not one of the clauses were ever executed. M. Brunetière, though an excellent man of business, could not draw blood from a stone. Madame de Staël, his wife, who had but little regard for him, could not pay his debts, however just; and in the midst of these pretensions and refusals Mademoiselle Clairon was dying with hunger. On our way home, my guardian, who was M. de Staël's counsellor and friend, related to me this transaction between him and the great actress, but added, "I beg you, my child, not to repeat what you have heard to-day: Mademoiselle Clairon is unhappy, and as poverty sours the disposition, she is unjust towards M. de Staël. "But he does not pay her," said I, "since you are the guardian angel who saves her from perishing with hunger, how is it that your friend, Gohier, does not rescue her from this state of distress?"

"The government is too poor. But do you speak to Lucien upon the subject: young lips may, with much grace, beg bread for such a woman as Mademoiselle Clairon; M. de Staël cannot pay her, and I have heavy charges upon me. I spoke to my brother-in-law upon the subject." Mademoiselle Clairon received material assistance from Lucien, but it was not till the ministry of Chaptal that she was effectually relieved from want. In a collection of autographs of celebrated persons, two curious pieces on this subject are preserved; the one, in some very energetic words of Mademoiselle Clairon, requests bread from the Minister of the Interior; the other has the two equally expressive lines which follow: "Good for two thousand francs payable at sight to Mademoiselle Clairon.—CHAPTAL."

I saw her occasionally. She was fond of me, but Talma and Mademoiselle Mars caused perpetual disputes between us. I was angry, because as she did not see their performance she could not appreciate all the talent of these two beings endowed from above with dramatic genius. Talma might be criticised, but Mademoiselle Mars was even then a diamond of the first water, without spot or defect. At length, I was one day much surprised to find my old

friend quite softened towards my favourité actress; and never could attribute the sudden change to any other cause than her having seen Mademoiselle Mars in one of her characters; she did not admit it, but I am almost certain of the fact. I had spoken so much of her that it was scarcely possible she should not wish to see her to judge for herself. In the Pupil, Mademoiselle Mars, in the simple action of letting fall a nosegay, unveils at once the secret of a young heart. This fact, so striking to the feelings, is, at the same time, one which could not be described, and yet Mademoiselle Clairon spoke to me of this action as if she had seen it; nor do I think that she would have imbibed from any other source opinions sufficiently strong to overcome her prejudices, though I know that old M. Antoine, a friend of Lekain, gave her frequent accounts of all that passed at the Comédie Française. I have, however, no doubt that she had been carried thither herself in a sedan-chair, and had seen and admired our charming actress. I have often seen Mademoiselle Mars off the stage, since that time, but I do not remember to have ever mentioned the circumstance to her—she could not but have been flattered by it.

It is well known that Mademoiselle Clairon was the cause, the innocent cause it is said, of the suicide of a man, who killed himself by a pistol-shot. Ever afterwards, she heard that shot every night at one o'clock, whether asleep or at a ball, on a journey or at an inn—it was the same thing; it overpowered the music of a fête,—it awoke her from repose,—and it resounded equally in the court of a post-house or of a palace. I cannot answer for it that there was no exaggeration in all this; but she who usually spoke in an exalted strain, here laid aside all pretension, all that could give any suspicion of seeking to produce effect. Albert, who believed in magnetism, wished, after hearing Mademoiselle Clairon's relation, to demonstrate to me that the thing was possible. I laughed then. . . . . Alas! since that time, I have, myself, had a terrible lesson to cure me of incredulity!

A part only of her memoirs, written by herself, have been printed.

CHAPTER LXXV.

Napoleon's smile—His account of the action at Algeziras and Admiral Linois—His joy at the success of the French fleet—The humiliation of England his most anxious desire—Activity in the ports of the Channel—The flotilla of Boulogne—Brunet's jest upon the *péniches*—He learns discretion—Inundation of pamphlets—Frequent disputes between Fouché and the First Consul—M. de Lucchesini—A dinner and diplomatic imprudence—Madame de Lucchesini—Probable authors of the pamphlets—The public baths of Paris—The mysterious packet—A fortnight of the great Alcander—Bonaparte and Bussy de Rabutin—Relation of my adventure to Junot—False conjectures and my mother suspected—Pamphlets burnt by her—Letters and more pamphlets from my brother—My brother's letter presented to Napoleon—Dramatic scene in the First Consul's cabinet—Remembrance of a wound—Bonaparte reckons up his true friends—His lively interest in my mother's illness—Anecdote of the army in Italy.

Those who were much about the person of Napoleon, can never forget the splendour which was shed over his features when he smiled; his eyes then became truly fine, their expression softened: and if the sentiment which produced the smile had any thing truly noble in it, its effect was infinitely heightened; it was then that his countenance became something more than that of man.

Well do I remember one of those fleeting but sublime moments, when the combat of Algeziras roused the emotions of his great soul: his countenance as he recounted the circumstances of this action, and dwelt complacently upon his words, became truly interesting. The admirable valour of Rear-admiral Linois, excited the sympathetic love of glory in Napoleon, and more especially when it caused the triumph of our flag over that of the Leopard. Admiral Linois with two ships of the line, one of eighty guns, one of sixty-four, and a frigate of forty, fought Sir James Saumarez, who commanded two ships of eighty guns, four of sixty-four, two frigates of thirty-six guns, and a lugger, in the bay of Gibraltar, before Algeziras, and took one of his sixty-fours, called the Hannibal.* All the glory of this fine action belonged to Admiral

* This is true, and occurred on the 6th of April, 1801, owing entirely to the fire of the Spanish batteries, but the French authoress omits to state the castigation which Sir James Saumarez inflicted, on the 13th of the same month in this same bay of Algeziras, on the squadron of Admiral Linois, together with

Linois, for he received very slight assistance from the Spanish land batteries. This success was followed by another equally brilliant; Captain Troude, who commanded the Formidable, one of Admiral Linois's two eighty-gun ships, was separated from the squadron a few days afterwards, and fell in with Sir James Saumarez and his three sixty-fours, to which he gave battle, and compelled Sir James to abandon one of them.

These facts Napoleon related; but it is impossible to describe the expression of his countenance while he invoked blessings on Rear-admiral Linois for having attached a gleam of glory to our fleet. Naval victories were rare at that time, and the First Consul took the most lively interest in this; I can affirm it, because I saw it. I saw it when he was only chief of the government, not yet even Consul for life! much less Emperor! But he was General Bonaparte, the conqueror of Arcola, of Lodi, of Marengo, the true patriot. He loved his country then, and he always loved it! But at that time, happy in being the first of persons, he wished for no other title.

The Rear-admiral received the only recompense which then made the heart of a Frenchman beat—a sword of honour. But his grateful country multiplied that recompense a thousand-fold, in the praises she still bestows on him who gained a triumph for our flag.

Since the treaty of Luneville, Napoleon had resumed, in all their activity, his views of an invasion of England. He had laid them aside to give his whole attention to more important affairs; but since the pacification of nearly the whole continent had become certain, and England appeared to be the sole impediment to a universal peace, the First Consul loudly stated that he would attempt every thing to compel her to treat with the French Republic. From this period may be dated the true origin of the hatred which existed between the First Consul and the English government, I say government, because I do not confound the English nation with the cabinet of St. James. England, perhaps more than any other nation, can boast of noble minds, and enthusiastic spirits, men of great talents, soaring genius, and bold conceptions. They appreciated the great man, and their homage was sufficient. All who had an opportunity of closely studying the character of Napoleon, knew that the predominating desire of his mind was the humiliation of England. It was his constant object; and during the fourteen years of his power, when I was always able to observe his actions and their motives, I knew his determination to be firmly

the reinforcement of five Spanish, and one French ship of the line, three frigates, and an incredible number of smaller vessels which had joined him.—*Editor.*

fixed upon affording to France the glory of conquering a rival who never engaged upon equal terms, and all his measures had reference to the same end.

Boulogne was designated, from the year 1801, as the chief station of the enterprise against England. The greatest activity suddenly prevailed in all the ports of the Channel; camps were formed on the coast, divisions of light vessels were organized, and multitudes were built. The flotilla, as it was called, created apparently with the greatest exertion, and all the apparatus of preparation, spread, as was intended, alarm on the opposite shore. The Boulogne flotilla was composed of extremely light boats, so small, that at Paris, where every thing forms the subject of a jest, they were called walnut-shells. Brunet, who at this time was a truly comic actor, performing in some piece which I do not remember, was eating walnuts; the shells of which, after a little preparation, he launched upon some water in a tub by his side. "What are you doing?" said his fellow-actor. "Making *des péniches*," replied Brunet. This was the name by which the flat-bottomed boats of the flotilla were known at Paris. But poor Brunet was made to atone by twenty-four hours' imprisonment for his unseasonable joke on the government; and the day after his release, the same piece was performed. When Brunet should have made the interdicted reply, he was silent. The other actor repeated the inquiry as to what he was doing? Still Brunet made no answer, and the other with an air of impatience proceeded, "Perhaps you do not know what you are about?"—"Oh, yes!" said Brunet, "I know very well what I am about, but I know better than to tell."—The laugh was general, and so were the applauses; and in truth, nothing could be more droll than the manner in which this was uttered; Brunet's countenance, in saying it, was of itself sufficient to provoke universal hilarity.

A very curious incident occurred to me about this time, which belongs to other circumstances, that gave a striking colour to the character of the period. This was the immense number of libellous pamphlets which were current in the second year of the Consulate, directed especially against the First Consul and his family. Bonaparte at last became violently provoked with Fouché upon the subject; and his displeasure burst out in several curious scenes, the more annoying to the minister, because they did not occur privately between himself and the First Consul, but before fifteen or twenty persons; so that I was myself present at two of them, one at Malmaison, and the other at the Tuileries.

These pamphlets Bonaparte greatly suspected to proceed from the foreigners in Paris, and even from the diplomatic body, that of

Prussia especially; for the obsequious bows and language of the Marquis de Lucchesini, who brought to Paris a character perfectly calculated to displease the head of the government, were very much at variance with the opinions he used to inculcate. The Revolution with him was inseparable from the horrors of 1793; he would admit none of the benefits which these misfortunes had procured for us, and held liberal principles of all kinds in the most supreme contempt. He had much sense and wit, and could be agreeable when he pleased, notwithstanding a very ugly face. I never liked, however, his measured phrases, always subjected to the forms of a cold politeness, and his eternal smile, ironical, without being pleasing, and I always thought his excess of cunning any thing but sagacious.

We met him one day at dinner at the house of Madame Divoff, a Russian lady, established at Paris, and wholly French in her feelings. He was in one of those moods of frankness, which, except they are intended to serve a particular purpose, are not, I think, quite advisable in a diplomatist. Junot, who was always open and unsuspecting in his conversation, entered into much disputation with him upon some very singular questions; the concordat for example, in which strangely enough M. de Lucchesini was the defender of the First Consul's proceedings, against the objections of Junot; and the nomination of the King of Etruria, of which also the ambassador approved, and which the republican principles of Junot looked upon as the first blow to our liberties. Though very moderate in his language, M. de Lucchesini certainly, in this debate, exceeded the limits of his instructions; and Junot said much which would have been more suitably confined to his own closet than uttered at the table of a stranger amongst a mixed company. It was, however, a singular spectacle to see the dispute between these two parties so oddly supported; the one the adorer of Bonaparte, blaming his desire to reign; the other his enemy, rejoicing to see him take up sceptres and crowns as playthings; seeming already to foresee the embarrassments they would occasion, and hoping they might ultimately prove the rock on which his power would be wrecked.

The First Consul heard all the particulars of this conversation the following day; but it was not till some months after, that Junot learnt that his General had been dissatisfied with the dinner and the discussion; Napoleon did not like to be blamed by a friend, any more than by other people, and this dinner was not without its consequences.

These pamphlets which inundated us with their venom, were supposed to be chiefly digested by persons attached to the northern

embassies, and Madame de Lucchesini was even said to be active in superintending them. She was not present at the dinner I have spoken of above, or her husband would have received a hint to be more prudent, for she had quite sense enough to understand that his ambassadorial functions were not in keeping with such unreserved discourse. She was, however, very ridiculous, affecting at forty-five the airs of a coy maiden of sixteen; speaking like a child, and professing incapacity to pronounce the letter *r*, unless, indeed, when she forgot herself.

I think myself, that the First Consul was rather unjust in laying the dissemination of these pamphlets so much to the account of the recognised representatives of the northern courts. The two Counts Cobentzel were incapable of such treachery; and if M. de Lucchesini and M. de Markoff could have sanctioned it, it must have been unknown to their governments. The Emperor Alexander, whose young heart beat with the chivalrous honour peculiar to the morning of life, did not, it is true, love Napoleon in 1802, but he already began to feel, notwithstanding the storm which rose soon after, a portion of that admiration on which the friendship of the Niemen was founded; and the soul which admires greatness, is incapable of a base action. I am disposed to believe that those scandalous libels and personal invectives were the productions of many uncredentiated strangers, who came amongst us for the double purpose of sowing discord and seeking pleasure. The First Consul was never able to develop the whole mystery of this iniquitous manœuvre. Two hundred specimens of these atrocious writings were seized in the boudoir of a young and pretty woman; in a perfumed and ornamented retreat, which should have harboured only romances, flowers, and billets-doux. The First Consul laughed when this fact was reported to him, but it was with a laugh of bitterness.

In relating the occurrence which connected me with these detestable pamphlets, I must observe that elegance had not then reached its present pitch amongst us, especially in the interior arrangement of our houses. A private bath was a luxury which appertained to very few; but the deficiency in this respect was in a great degree remedied by the perfect convenience offered to the public by the baths of Tivoli, of Albert, and of Vigier, which were frequented by ladies of the first distinction. I was in the habit of using Albert's; and was one day in the bath, when the young woman who usually attended me, gave to my maid a large packet directed to Madame Junot the younger. It was brought, she said, by a very respectable man dressed in black and advanced in years, but of whom I knew no

more by her description, than of a Chinese mandarin. On opening it a multitude of little sheets of note paper flew about, which on inspection proved to be covered over the four sides with very small and fine writing in a perfectly legible hand; the whole of them copies of three different pamphlets, and a few of one number of a royalist journal, which Fouché's active police having suppressed in print was now disseminated in written copies to the amount of several hundred. One of the pamphlets was particularly scandalous, and was entitled "A fortnight of the Great Alcander." It appeared every fortnight, professing to give a journal of the First Consul's proceedings, and was filled with such stupid absurdities that it was neither a subject for laughter or anger, but very fit to excite disgust. The First Consul was preposterously accused of lavishing extravagant sums on his mistresses; and poor Bellilotte was attacked with a rancour which she certainly did not deserve. The first time Napoleon heard of this scandalous journal, he paid little attention to it, except to inquire what was meant by the Great Alcander. When he was informed that it was Louis XIV. he became seriously angry. "To Louis XIV.!" he exclaimed: "ah! those people know very little of me to compare me to him: to Louis XIV.!" Then taking up the libel again, he continued reading, occasionally striking the floor with his foot, and exclaiming, "Louis XIV.!" He would have an explanation of how and when the Great King, who was not great, obtained the title of the Great Alcander. He had never read the works of Bussy de Rabutin; he asked for them, looked them through in one night, and they offended him. "Your Count of Bussy-Rabutin," said he to Junot, the next morning at breakfast, "was a bad man." The specialty of the pronoun referred to the circumstance of Junot's having been born in the village of which Bussy-Rabutin had been lord, and where his mansion stood in very good condition in the year 1802.*

But to return to my packet; I examined all these innumerable

* In a tower attached to this mansion, there was a collection of ill-painted portraits, but curious on account of the persons they represent. They were executed by Bussy-Rabutin during the periods of his various exiles, and were likenesses of most of the ladies of the Court of Louis XIV. In each picture was an emblem of the character of the woman, intending to express his own opinion of them. Madame de la Vallière had a violet; Madame de Montespan was represented as one of the seven capital sins; Madame de Sévigné, cousin of Rabutin, and whom he never forgave because she would not yield to his wishes, was placed in a scale; in the other was a chub-cheeked zephyr, blowing with all his strength against her; beneath these scales was written, "Lighter than air."

little sheets to find some note, or notice by which I might imagine to whom I was indebted for so singular a present; but in vain; they were but endless reduplications of the same three pamphlets and the Royalist Journal. One only index could I gather, and that so very slight that I dared not affix much importance to it, or even speak of it; it was a perfume of a very particular fragrance. Before I left the bath I closely questioned the girl who had taken in the packet, but with no effect; she evidently knew nothing of the person who delivered it; and I was obliged to return, wondering who could be so absurd as to place in the hands of a young woman so giddy as I was, a collection of papers which might compromise so many people. Who could have so strange an idea of my situation as to choose me, the wife of General Junot, the most devoted of the First Consul's friends, to be the depository of libels against him, and against his sisters, one of whom was my particular and beloved friend! For a moment I thought of going to my mother for advice, but my good angel made me prefer applying to Junot, which I did without loss of time.

I found him on the point of setting out for the Tuileries to receive the order of the day, as he regularly did at twelve o'clock, whenever the First Consul was at Paris. I related my adventure to him; and he seemed surprised like myself; but he had much more experience of the world than I had, and immediately imbibed suspicions, which directed his researches, and led him to the belief, afterwards confirmed, that this singular expedient was adopted to injure him. "But why," said I, "did they take this packet to the baths? you see it must be a mistake." "That is precisely the circumstance which convinces me that there is no mistake in the case. The man, the gentleman, as you call him, who delivered this packet, had no inclination to meet a face which would not have been so convenient as the servant of the baths. There he has left no trace; here it would have been quite another thing; he might have fallen in with me at the door; for the same reason he did not go to your mother's house."

"Then it is really true, that these venomous papers were intended for me," said I, weeping. "But why was I chosen? I could but do two things with them: either throw them into the fire, or distribute them. The writers could hardly be so absurd as to intend the one, or expect the other. All this puzzles me. The First Consul pretends that my drawing-room and my mother's are full of his enemies; a fine disturbance it would create if he should learn that I have here a whole edition of libels against him. I can hear him now! He would say directly, that the authors knew very well whom they were

applying to! or else, 'they certainly came from your mother.'"

Alas! my poor mother was then very ill, and was thinking upon very different and much higher subjects. Junot, however, did not hear me lightly, he was struck by the words, "They came from your mother." He embraced me, took up all the papers in the envelope and set out for the Tuileries. As soon as the order of the day was given, he requested an audience of the First Consul; and presenting the papers, related their history with perfect simplicity. As I had foreseen, Napoleon's first words were an accusation against my mother and myself.

"It is impossible," said he, to Junot, "that these papers should have been sent to your wife, without the knowledge that they would be well received,—if only for the sake of amusing her mother." Junot made no answer; he knew the First Consul's prejudice, or rather mistake, respecting my mother; and he wished to convince him that neither she nor I could be in any way interested in the disagreeable affair; but he could not without proofs. He hoped to obtain some clue to the affair by means of one Fouillon, who was known to him as the editor of these pamphlets; he also had cognizance of several other persons, who were concerned in this base proceeding; and he set to work in earnest to find out the motive which led them to choose for their agent, a young woman much more disposed to laugh and dance than to read newspapers, still less libels.

Junot had good sense, a rapid and acute judgment; his *coup d'œil* was prompt, and his reasoning almost always right, notwithstanding his hastiness and vehemence. The maid of the bath was sent for, but her renewed examination threw no light on the subject: she knew only that the packet was directed to me; in this there could be neither equivocation nor mistake; and further, that the old gentleman had desired her to deliver it to Madame Junot. "Perhaps, my sister-in-law," said I. Junot shrugged his shoulders; in fact, that could not be; but the choice they had made of me for a political agent appeared so eccentric, that I imagined every thing rather than the possibility that I was upon the scene, in my own individual capacity. Junot seeing me affected to melancholy, if not indisposition, resolved to consult my mother that she might scold me. But what was his astonishment, when she immediately said, "I have received just such another packet, my dear son."

"Let me see it, then," cried Junot, "let me compare the envelope with ours."—"The packet!" answered my mother.—"Do you really believe then that I should keep such low trash; conceptions fit only for the perusal of chambermaids? Truly not I!"—"Then what have

you done with them?"—"Burnt them all. When M. de Bois-Cressy, after unsealing the packet, had read some of the horrors it contained, I did not choose that my table should any longer be stained with such vile productions. I told him to put them all into the fire; at first, he was not disposed to do so, because he preferred reading them. A hundred newspapers a day, as you know, would not satisfy his ravenous appetite for politics; but this abominable packet contained no newspapers, and the whole was committed to the flames."

Junot kissed my mother's two little hands, saying, "How I love you, for being so good!" My mother looked at him with a sweet smile. "It is not on your own account that you thank me, my son," said she, "but on Bonaparte's. Why should you be surprised that I could destroy attacks upon his reputation, and especially such as are absolutely false? the little I saw of those libels, certainly was so. If you think I cherish an unjust aversion to General Bonaparte, you are very much mistaken. I do not entertain for him that admiration which transports into regions where no one can follow; but I consider him great, and even good, only his own interests lead him to forget or neglect those of others. Why should I not excuse that? It is the common failing of mankind. Well, he is as good as other men, but do not come to tell me that he is more than man."

This had always been my mother's manner of speaking of General Bonaparte since my marriage. Junot returned home thoughtful, but rejoiced to be able to relate to the First Consul my mother's war against the pamphlets. He wished to see me before going to the Tuileries, where he expected to find the First Consul in Madame Bonaparte's apartments, as he spent every evening there, when they did not go into public. He repeated the anecdote to me, and I shared his surprise. I thought the affair more and more strange; but we had not yet come to the end of it. While we continued discussing, the evening slipt away, so that Junot could not go to the Tuileries. The next day was devoted to a parade, so that he was again obliged to postpone his interview with the First Consul.

The evening of this day a courier arrived from Marseilles, where my brother was stationed as one of the three commissaries-general of the police of the republic. The courier brought us a letter from my brother, with another packet of the same lucky, or unlucky, pamphlets and journals; the whole written by the hand, but by way of variety, some of these were in the *provençal* dialect, worthy the days of the good King Réné. My brother had also received his packet, but with the difference I have noticed, and also, it was added, that the pamphlets were sent by my mother, but through my agency; only they had the

prudence to make me say—"You will easily understand why I do not write to you myself." My brother, on whose good nature they had relied rather too much, never suspecting me as the giver of this present, at first took it for a hoax. Albert had never participated in my mother's resentment, which he thought unjust, but was devotedly attached to the First Consul. I thought as he did; and without blaming my mother, whom we adored and respected, we did not exactly think with her respecting Napoleon. But Albert knew my mother's noble heart, and was perfectly sure that she would not join in giving publicity to such a tissue of vile abuse; and my name introduced in the affair was, of itself, sufficient to convince him that it was all a deception. He accordingly sent for one of the police officers whom he could most trust, and charged him to make all possible researches at Marseilles to discover who had transcribed the pamphlets and who had delivered them. And judging that my mother and myself might be compromised in this mysterious business, his affection induced him, without loss of time, to send a courier to Junot with the whole atrocious baggage of pamphlets, journals, and letters, several from me, but not written by me. Junot read Albert's letters, and leaped for joy at the thought of his triumph.

"I should not sleep to-night," said he, "if I did not see the First Consul; and it is not yet too late to ask for a moment's audience; besides, the whole affair is not a little complicated, and the First Consul must read Albert's letter."

I approved his intention, and though it was near eleven o'clock, he proceeded to the Tuileries. The First Consul, fatigued with the review of the morning, was just going to bed, but Junot was admitted at once. Napoleon made a remark upon the air of hilarity which his countenance exhibited; and Junot, without answering, put my brother's letter before him. He read it rapidly, and seemed much struck by it, for he directly read it again, laid it upon the table, walked some time about the room, then took the letter up, and ran through it again, rubbing his forehead: at last he suddenly stopped before Junot, and said, "Can you give me your word of honour that your mother-in-law is not concerned in all this?"—"My mother-in-law!" exclaimed Junot, and he related to the First Consul the history of the burnt papers. As he spoke, Napoleon became by degrees more attentive; then began to walk rapidly up and down the room, and at last assumed an angry frown. Junot could not understand it. "If Madame Permon's opinion was not so well known," said he, with bitterness, "she would not have such presents made her. See if such have been sent to Madame Gheneuc, or to the mother-in-law of any of my other Gen-

erals. Madame Permon dislikes me—this is known, and is the groundwork of the whole proceeding. People, who detest me, meet in her drawing-room; people who, before my return from Egypt, were prisoners in the Temple for their opinions; these are her friends. And you, great blockhead! you make them your friends also.... you make friends of my enemies!"

Junot looked stupified, staring at the First Consul. He make friends of his General's enemies! He thought it all a dream. "Of whom are you speaking, my General?" said he, at length. "Of M. d'Orsay, to be sure—he whom they call the handsome d'Orsay. Was he not on the point of being shot for a conspirator; and was he not sent to the Temple? Fouché told me, the other day, that he was a dangerous man."

Junot smiled bitterly. "My General, you have given me to understand in two syllables to whom I am indebted for all this, and I shall know how to thank him. I shall begin by saying that citizen Fouché has told you a falsehood, in asserting that Albert d'Orsay was a dangerous man and a conspirator. He is the most loyal and honest man living; full of honour, and if in returning to France he has given his word to be faithful to the established government, he will keep it. I should have thought, my General, that as Fouché gave him the title of my friend, you would have held him worthy of your esteem as a man of honour; for I could not give my friendship to any one who was not. But, General, you should never have believed that an enemy of yours could be my friend." Junot passed his hand over his forehead, which was dripping. Napoleon knew him too well not to be conscious how much he suffered. He approached him, and pressed his hand affectionately. Junot was suffocating.

"Come! don't be childish. I tell you I am not speaking of you, my faithful friend. Have you not proved your attachment when I was in fetters? would you not have followed me to prison?"—"I should have followed you to the scaffold!" cried Junot, striking his fist upon the table. Napoleon laughed. "Well! don't you see then that it is impossible for me to say any thing that should go to your heart, and hurt you, Monsieur Junot." And he pulled his ears, his nose, and his hair. Junot drew back.

"Ah! I have hurt you," said Napoleon, approaching him, and resting his little white hand upon Junot's light hair, caressing him, as if he meant to pacify a child; "Junot," he continued, "do you remember being at the Serbelloni Palace at Milan, when you had just received a wound,—just here,—at this place." And the little white hand gently touched the large cicatrice. "I pulled away your hair, and my

hand was full of your blood . . . . ." The First Consul turned pale at the recollection. And it is a remarkable circumstance that Napoleon spoke to me not less than ten times, in the course of his reign, of this incident at Milan, and never without starting and turning pale at the recollection of his blood-stained hand. "Yes," he continued, with a movement as if to repress a shudder; "yes, I confess, at that moment I felt that there is a weakness inherent in human nature, which is only more exquisitely developed in the female constitution. I then understood that it was possible to faint. I have not forgotten that moment, my friend; I have laid it by in a safe place for remembrance—and the name of Junot can never be mingled in my mind with even the appearance of perfidy. Your head is too hot, too heedless, but you are a loyal and brave fellow. You, Lannes, Marmont, Duroc, Berthier, Bessières." At each name, Napoleon took a pinch of snuff, and a turn in the room, sometimes making a pause and smiling as the name recalled any proof of attachment. "My son, Eugène—yes, those are hearts which love me, which I can depend upon. Lemarrois, too, is another faithful friend. And that poor Rapp, he has been but a short time with me, yet he pushes his love even to an extent that might give offence; do you know he scolds me sometimes?"

The First Consul, who, while speaking, had taken Junot's arm, was leaning upon him as he walked; then standing near the window he disengaged his arm, and, resting it on my husband's shoulder, compelled him almost to stoop towards him as he leant upon him.

"How many of the persons now passing below this window," said Junot smiling, "would give years of their existence to be where I am now, close to you, my General, supporting that arm which can raise the world! Yes, I believe, there are many who would make great sacrifices only to be able to say they had been so fortunate—but, in all Paris, there is not a heart as happy as mine is at this moment."

Napoleon disengaged his arm, looking at Junot with that ineffable smile to which he owed his power of conquering with a single word, and said, "Well! my old friend, we will say no more of this foolish affair of the pamphlets—but attend: what am I to think when I know that you receive so many of my enemies? That your wife and your mother-in-law are intimately acquainted with numerous persons who are my enemies, who hate me and desire my fall? nay, more, my death—as they have proved."—"But, General, give me leave to answer, that among all the persons you speak of, there is not one who, even before my wife's marriage, would have dared in her presence to

use an expression disrespectful to you. With respect to my mother-in-law, I have frequently heard her speak of you, my General, but never in terms which could give me pain. Madame Permon is too much attached to Madame Bonaparte, to your mother, and to all your brothers."—"Oh! yes, Lucien especially," interrupted the First Consul, with a bitter smile. "Lucien is her favourite. She thinks him a prodigy: nevertheless, Madame Permon is no republican! How do they contrive to agree on that point?"

"I have not twice heard my mother-in-law talk politics since I have belonged to her family," replied Junot. "The subjects of conversation in her drawing-room are literature and music, a thousand important nothings, the affairs of society and fashion; and it must be confessed that the society of the old school understood the management of such conversation better than we do: besides, my General, if you were aware of the present state of Madame de Permon's health, you would not suspect a person preparing for the grave, to be amusing herself with such miserable trifles."

Here I ought to do full justice to Napoleon. When Junot was speaking thus of my mother, he was some paces distant from him; he stepped hastily to him, and pressed his arm forcibly, saying, "Ah! what do you say! Is Madame Permon very ill?"—"Dying, General; all the physicians we have called in agree upon her danger."—"Corvisart must see her." He rang the bell. "Send some one immediately to tell citizen Corvisart that I wish to see him. Is it possible!" said he, as he walked with an agitated step, "is it possible, that a woman so fresh and beautiful only fifteen months ago, can be so seriously ill? Poor Madame Permon! Poor Madame Permon!"

He sunk into his arm-chair, put his two hands before his eyes, and sat some time without speaking; then rising, he recommenced that rapid promenade which was his usual habit when strongly affected. "Desgenettes and Ivan must also be sent to her; it is impossible that the faculty should be unable to save a person so lately as healthy and fresh as a rose."—"General," replied Junot, "Madame Permon's malady is of a deplorable nature in the history of the healing art; she will sink in defiance of medical aid." And hereupon he repeated Baudelocque's answer to him, when Junot, fearing for my mother's life, asked his opinion: "General, he who could cure such a complaint as Madame Permon's, might boast of performing as great a miracle as if he had restored a decapitated man to life."

Napoleon seemed quite overwhelmed in listening to this sentence; but impressions, however strong, were only fugitively marked upon

his countenance; he soon recovered himself, and was apparently quite calm when Junot took leave of him.

My recent mention of my husband's wound recalls to my memory a trivial circumstance connected with it, which happened in Italy. This terrible wound, which had nearly cost him an eye, kept him confined six weeks; notwithstanding M. Ivan's fraternal care of his patient, he was very long in recovering from its effects.

During the tedious hours that he lay upon a sofa, dressed in a white wrapping gown, he played the agreeable, being really a very handsome youth; and, as his greatest defect at that time was too high a colour, his complexion was improved by his loss of blood. Madame Bonaparte, and Madame Leclerc were among the ladies who assisted in dissipating, by their presence, the tedium of confinement. One day, when they were making this visit of charity, Junot was very much enfeebled, not only by the effects of his wound, but of an abundant bleeding he had undergone that morning; however, he collected all his strength to receive his charming visitors, happy in having beside his couch of suffering two of the most lovely women in Milan. For if Madame Bonaparte could not be compared in beauty to Madame Leclerc, she was very handsome at that period, and the extreme elegance of her manners, and really fascinating gracefulness, might well be taken as a substitute for more regular beauty. Indeed, if her teeth had been good, I should have preferred her face to that of the most celebrated beauty of her court. The pleasing conversation of two such women was no doubt the best panacea for pain, and at first produced its full effect. Junot was the happiest of men, to be attended by two such *sœurs de la charité*. Time, however, rolled softly on, and, with its lapse, matters changed. Junot's heart began to sink, his sight to fail, he became paler, and at length his eyes closed. Madame Leclerc first perceived his condition, and standing up, cried out, "Good heavens! Junot! what is the matter?"

Junot had still strength enough left to extend towards her the hand which lay upon his bosom, and instantly Paulette's white gown was covered with blood. The bandage round his arm had unfastened, and the blood confined within the thick sleeve of his wrapper had flowed gently and unperceived till his strength was nearly exhausted; but the effort of moving his arm in a moment of surprise had caused it to spring forth in abundance, and Junot fainted completely. On recovering he found himself the object of the most anxious cares, tendered by the prettiest hands in the world. Heldt, his Alsacian valet, had replaced the bandage, and the ladies, after a few moments'

stay, left the patient to repose, and the accident had no other consequence than retarding his convalescence.

"But," said I, when he related this little adventure to me, "how was it that you did not feel that your arm was bathed in blood?"—"I was aware of it," he replied; "but could I desire these ladies to leave me?"—"No, but you could have had the bandage replaced."—"That could only be done in their presence when I was insensible; in any other case the thing was impossible."

I looked at Junot with amazement, asking myself if he had been educated by Yseult with the white hands, or the fair Genièvre, for none but a Tristan or a Launcelot could have had such ideas; when suddenly the remembrance of a certain promenade on the Boulevards in the year of grace 1795, when Junot was madly in love with Mademoiselle Paulette Bonaparte, crossed my mind, and the whole was explained.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

A word upon the libels—Strange ideas of foreigners respecting the First Consul—Scene between Lannes and Napoleon—Errors respecting *tutoying*—Traits of Napoleon—The Polytechnic School—The Aide-de-camp Lacuée and the young enthusiast at Malmaison—The Father's pupil—Severity of the Abbé Bossu—The First Consul an examiner—Scene in his cabinet—The order of admission.

I HAVE spoken at length of this affair of the libellous pamphlets, because it furnishes a good ground for the extremely false ideas which existed in foreign countries of the interior condition of France, and especially of the intercourse which General Bonaparte had with those who surrounded him. It is an important circumstance of his life, and the cause of the judgments passed upon him in many countries, where they did not take the trouble of investigating the truth of what was advanced concerning him. I believe the prejudices of distrust exaggerated the good as much as the bad; for amongst the strangers who just now abounded in France, many entertained the most burlesque notions both for and against Napoleon. One believed that he drank a cup of coffee every hour; another, that he passed entire days in the bath; a third, that he took his dinner standing; and a thousand reveries the one more ridiculous than the other. It is remarkable, that the most extraordinary versions of these

absurdities came from England, and that the emigrants who returned from thence had formed opinions totally different from the reality. One whom I knew was perfectly astonished at seeing him, so entirely false was the impression he had imbibed. One of these pamphlets, badly composed, and in manuscript, contained a most ridiculous scene, said to have passed between Napoleon and General Lannes, of which Madame Bonaparte was the subject. The whole is absolutely false; but it is a curious fact, that at a later period, a dispute really took place between Lannes and Napoleon, in which Madame Bonaparte was concerned. At the time of the affair of the military chest of the guards, General Lannes, who really was not so much to blame as was represented, learnt that Madame Bonaparte had been attempting to screen the guilty parties at his expense, and gave vent to his wrath against her in the cabinet of the First Consul, to an extent which, perhaps, a friend should not have indulged in. He told Napoleon, that, instead of listening to the gossiping of an *old* woman, he had much better take a young one. The discussion was warm; keen and even abusive words were not spared; General Lannes forgot himself so far as to speak in injurious terms of Madame Bonaparte, and was really in a passion on that occasion. But he had never before disputed with the First Consul; nor was the thing easy. It is the same with the familiarity with which Lannes and others are said to have been in the habit of addressing him. I do not deny that some of these generals used the pronoun *thou*, in speaking to him, though fully persuaded of the contrary; but for this I can answer, that if such a habit ever existed, it was entirely disused after his return from Egypt. I never heard any one *tutoyer* the First Consul. He did so by many of them, by Junot to the last;* it was only on ascending the throne that he ceased to address them in this familiar style in public; and in the cordial intercourse of private friendship which always subsisted between him and Lannes, Junot, Berthier, and two or three others, he continued to use the pronoun *thou*. But to say *toi* to General Bonaparte, was quite another thing. I repeat, that I do not believe Lannes ever did so. Already in Italy we find Bourrienne did so no longer; Junot never did; nor did Berthier, who with the army in Italy, was surely sufficiently intimate with him,—if

* Accordingly in the conversation related in the preceding chapter, and indeed, in all the conversations between Napoleon and Junot in the French work, Napoleon always uses the pronoun *thou*, and Junot *you;* but as the French familiar style of *tutoying* would sound oddly to an English ear, the difference could not be marked in the translation. It is in fact to hold the language of the Quakers.—*Editor.*

any one could be. But after the campaigns of Italy and Egypt, Napoleon felt too strongly the necessity of being obeyed, and of establishing around him that barrier of respect which familiarity destroys, to permit such a fashion of addressing him. In some memoirs, you might imagine General Lannes extending his hand to Napoleon, and accosting him with "*Bon jour, comment te portes-tu?*" But certainly, if in his sleep or in a fit of absence he had been guilty of such irregularity, the First Consul would have known how to repress it by some such reply as M. de Narbonne gave to the friend whom he had never seen, "Very well, friend, but what is thy name?" At least I can affirm, that during the long period in which I was witness of the intercourse of Napoleon with General Lannes, I never either heard or saw any thing of the kind.

General Lannes was much attached to Napoleon, but his friendship did not extend to all that belonged to him; and in the five or six weeks preceding the departure of the former for Lisbon, two or three rather warm explanations took place between them, upon a subject which afterwards occupied all Europe. But I anticipate; this did not occur till the close of the year 1802.

Napoleon has always been represented by his enemies in a false light, which his friends, his partisans, or even those who love the truth, were capable of elucidating: he laughed himself when at St. Helena, at the tyrant's skin, with which he was invested. If this extraordinary being had remained in a private station, he would have made an excellent father and head of a family;—in a word, a good man. But he was lifted out of it, and ambition succeeded, with its escort of high conceptions, vast projects, and all that was good, tender, and amiable, was soon stifled under the weight of this enlarged existence. These good feelings were restrained, but not destroyed, nor even were they replaced by bad ones. He had a bad opinion of human nature. Was he wrong? A thousand traits might be related of him which show the goodness of his heart in its first emotions; but prejudice will see only vanity in them; the same might be said of all the actions of Henry IV. The perfect good nature of the best and greatest king which France ever had, might be construed by malicious ingenuity into *a desire to appear great.*

In the time of the Consulate there was at Paris an Abbé Bossu, who examined such young people as were received into the Polytechnic School. He was not the only examiner, but his *veto* was terrible; he was a man of great learning, and very severe. The Polytechnic School, created at first under the name of the Central School of public works, by virtue of a decree of the convention in Germinal of the

year 3, (21st March, 1795,) after being disorganized by the destructive system which ruined us, had been reconstructed and put into activity by the First Consul in Frimaire of the year 8, immediately after his accession to power.* The analysis of the mathematical sciences with their application to mechanism, geometry, etc., the physical sciences, including chemistry and general physics, formed the course of study pursued in the Polytechnic School from its foundation. The most illustrious names in knowledge and science were then at the head of that battalion of young men whose adolescent minds were eager to become participators in the sublime acquirements of their masters.†

The aide-de-camp on duty, one day crossing the court of the mansion at Malmaison, found there a young man of a pleasing countenance, and good figure, well dressed, and bearing in his whole appearance the stamp of good birth and good education. He was leaning against one of the two great sentry boxes which stood on the east side of the inner gate, looking towards the house with an uneasy and melancholy air, and apparently seeking some one whom he might address. The aide-de-camp, M. de Lacuée, approached him, and with his habitual politeness, inquired if he wanted any thing there? The young man starting from his profound reverie answered:

"Ah! sir, I want what every one tells me is impossible, and yet I shall die if I cannot obtain it; I want to see the First Consul. I came into this court; but at the door of the house I was so brutally repulsed—I was asked if I had an appointment.—Oh, that I could have one! I believe an appointment to meet the most adorable mistress could not make my heart beat so violently as would an appointment from General Bonaparte. I must speak to him."

And the young man again cast his large black eyes, swimming in tears, upon the mansion. M. de Lacuée was always strongly attracted towards any thing that presented itself to him out of the ordinary routine. This young man of distinguished address, with an

* The First Consul did not found the Polytechnic School, as is stated by many writers; he re-established it the 16th December, 1799, which may have given rise to the error. It was the Convention that organized most of the fine institutions of this nature in France.

† France owes much to such men as Monge, Berthollet, Vauquelin, Fourcroy, Chaptal, and Lagrange, so famous in literary and scientific acquirements; they are highly to be esteemed on account of their general utility to the country, and were foremost in their arduous endeavours to organize this celebrated school on the best footing. It is indeed unrivalled in Europe; and almost every Frenchman of celebrity or of deep erudition has been bred up within its walls; knowledge has become the inheritance of the youth of France.

animated countenance, eyes of fire, and a voice trembling with emotion, at once inspired him with interest. He saw a romantic adventure in the rencounter; he advanced towards the young man, who was standing in an attitude of natural grace, leaning against the sentry-box, and looking with longing eyes to the house, and said, "Well, sir! what do you want with the First Consul? I am the aide-de-camp on duty, and will undertake to present your request, if it is a reasonable one."—"You, sir!" exclaimed the young man, springing towards M. de Lacuée, seizing and pressing the hand he offered him; "are you the First Consul's aide-de-camp? Oh! if you knew what a service you could do me! I must be conducted to him."—"What do you want with him?"—"I must speak to him." Then he added, in a low tone, "It is a secret."

Lacuée looked at the young solicitor; he stood before him, his bosom palpitating, his respiration hurried; but his soul shot a ray of purity and innocence into the expression of his countenance; this young man cannot be dangerous, said Lacuée to himself. And taking him by the arm, he led him into the inner court. As they passed the gate, Duroc and Junot entered on horseback coming from Paris; they stopped, and alighted to salute their comrade, who related his little adventure. "What!" said both of them at once, "you are going to introduce him without even knowing his name?"

Lacuée acknowledged that he had not asked it. Junot then approached the young man and told him, that the First Consul was certainly very accessible, but still that it was very necessary to know the motive which urged any one to request an audience, and that it was impossible to announce an anonymous solicitor.

The young man blushed like a girl; but he gave his name; adding, with a respectful bow, "It is true, General. My father lives in the country, and his knowledge is sufficiently extensive to enable him to instruct me in all branches of elementary education; directing my studies with a view to my admission into the Polytechnic School. Judge then, General, of my distress, and his also, when on our presenting ourselves to the Abbé Bossu, who, as it appears, is the person who must decide whether or no I can be entered, he absolutely refused to examine me, as soon as he was informed that my father only had been my instructor, and that I had not been taught by any professor. 'Of what consequence is that,' I asked, 'if I know what is required?' But he was inflexible, and could not be induced to put a single question to me." "But," said Duroc, with his natural mildness, "it is a rule, and whether a good one or otherwise, is alike to all comers. What do you wish the First Consul to do in the case?"—"To examine

me," answered the young man, with the most engaging simplicity; "I am sure that when he has put any questions to me that he may judge proper, he will pronounce me worthy of sharing the studies of those young persons of whom he proposes to form officers capable of executing his great designs."

The three comrades looked at each other and smiled; Duroc and Junot thought as Lacuée had done, that this young man, with his ardent speech and look of fire, could not but be agreeable to Napoleon, and Duroc went to open the matter to him.

"So, the young enthusiast would have me examine him?" said he, with one of his most gracious smiles; then rubbing his chin, he continued, "how could such an idea have entered his head?—It is a very singular thing." He walked about for some time in silence, then added—"How old may he be?"—"I cannot tell, General, but should guess about seventeen or eighteen."

"Let him come in." The young petitioner was introduced. His brilliant countenance expressed the summit of happiness, as he cast his eye upon the First Consul. He looked as if his existence depended upon the first word of Napoleon, who advanced towards him with that smile which cast over his countenance a charm entirely different at these moments when he intended to be gracious, from his usual expression.—"Well, young man," said he, "so you wish me to examine you?"

The youth trembled with joy, and could make no answer; he stood silent with his eyes fixed on the First Consul. Napoleon did not like either the boldness of presumption or the bashfulness of fear; but that which he now saw was silence because the heart spoke too loudly,—and he understood it.

"Compose yourself, my child: you are not at this moment sufficiently calm to answer me; I am going to employ myself in other affairs; by and by we will resume yours."—"Do you see that young man," said the First Consul, leading Junot to the recess of a window, "if I had a thousand such as he the conquest of the world would be but a promenade." He turned his head aside to contemplate the youth, who, plunged in meditation, was probably revolving in his mind what questions were likely to be put to him. In about half an hour Napoleon commenced the examination, in which the young candidate acquitted himself admirably. "And have you really had no other instructor than your father?" asked the First Consul with surprise. "No, General; but he was a good master, because he knew how to bring up a citizen to be useful to his country, and especially to follow the great destinies which you promised to it."

Junot observed that they were all astonished at the almost prophetical expression with which the youth pronounced the last words. "I am about to give you a line, which will open the sanctuary to you, my child," said the First Consul; and he wrote a few words upon a paper which he presented to the young man.

On arriving at Paris he hastened to the Abbé Bossu, who, on seeing him, exclaimed, "What do you come for? There is nothing here for you."

But the youth held a talisman which was worth a magic ring, and which the Abbé Bossu having read could not refuse to obey, it was as follows:—"M. Bossu will receive M. Eugène de Kervalègne; I have examined him myself, and find him worthy of admission.

"BONAPARTE."

The young man accordingly became a distinguished pupil of the Polytechnic School. His advancement in life was rapid at first; my brother knew him at Toulon, where he had an appointment relative to the bridges and roads. His attachment for Napoleon amounted to idolatry.

The First Consul long remembered this adventure, and one day related it to Cardinal Maury, at a dinner at St. Cloud; the Cardinal, it happened, knew the young man's family, and confirmed him in the good opinion he had formed of his character, disposition, and adventurous spirit.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Illness of my mother—My first pregnancy—The pine-apple—Madame Bonaparte's goodness—Predictions with cards—Wager between the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte on the sex of my child—New Year's-day—Celebration of Twelfth-day—Junot's distraction, and his visit to the Tuileries—Kindness of the First Consul—His message—The news of my accouchement carried to the Tuileries—The First Consul's compliments and his lost wager—Extraordinary conduct of my father-in-law—The barcelonnette—St. Helena memorial refuted—Popularity of Napoleon's government—His letter to George III.—The war against England a national war—Retirement of Mr. Pitt and his colleagues—The cessation of hostilities between France and England—The First Consul's remarks upon England—Peace signed between France and the Ottoman Porte—The republican crusade—Berthier—Junot's Egyptian seraglio.

My poor dear mother was now suffering under a state of severe illness, which neither our cares nor our affection could alleviate, but

which she endured with the most admirable fortitude. Her distressing state added to my indisposition, and is even now a melancholy remembrance almost too solemn for these pages. The final stroke, which was to inflict on me this heart-corroding grief, was not yet given, but it was threatened, and contributed to my present suffering.

I was at this time far advanced in my first pregnancy, and had suffered much; surrounded by the tenderest attentions, spoiled, as I may say, by my own family, and bearing about me the child who was to make me proud of the name of mother, I ought not, perhaps, to have been sensible of suffering.

At that period the culture of the pine-apple was not so well understood as it is at present, and it was consequently a great rarity. In my peculiar situation, I became possessed of a longing for this fruit, that produced a degree of intense suffering; and in order to satisfy my whim, Junot, with the affectionate gallantry of a man whose wife is about for the first time to make him a father, ran all over Paris, offering twenty louis for the object I so much coveted. Disappointed in his endeavours, he informed Madame Bonaparte of the circumstance, and she, with her characteristic kindness of heart, sent me the only one that was procurable from the hot-house at Malmaison. From a singular repulsion of feeling, this delicious fruit, so eagerly desired by me, and obtained with so much difficulty, became, when actually in my possession, disgusting.

Nothing could be more kind than Madame Bonaparte always was to young women in my situation; she entered into all our feelings, and interested herself in every thing that could be agreeable to us: in these circumstances she was truly worthy of love. On hearing the history of the pine-apple, she predicted to me, "You will have a daughter;" and in support of her opinion proposed a game of patience. I knew by experience all the *ennui* which this unfortunate game promised; but there was no refusing, and in spite of my incredulity, I was compelled to sit down and see my destiny settled by the caprice of the cards. It is known that the Empress Josephine was superstitiously credulous in these matters, and, in fact, I was witness, in the years 1808 and 1809, to two events of this kind not a little extraordinary. This time she kept me above an hour, cutting with the right hand and the left, naming days, hours, and months, and ended at length, by confirming her prediction of a girl.

"Or a boy," said the First Consul, who came in at that moment, and who always made game of Josephine's cards; "it is certain that Madame Junot will have either the one or the other, and if I were you, Josephine, I would not risk my reputation for sorcery, by a too

confident prediction." "She will have a girl, I tell you, Bonaparte; what wager will you lay me of it?" "I never bet," said the First Consul; "if you are sure of the fact—it is dishonest; if not—it is as foolish as losing money at play." "Well, bet sweetmeats, then." "And what will you lay me?" "I will work a carpet to put under your feet at your desk." "Well, now, that is something useful. On such terms I will bet you that Madame Junot has a boy. Now, mind," said he, turning to me, "that you do not make me lose;" and laughing as he looked at me, he added—"but what will become of the wager if you should have both a boy and a girl?" "I will tell you, General, you must give me both wagers."

And there was something so ridiculous in this idea of boy and girl coming at once, that even I could not refrain from joining in the laugh, while my look of consternation increased the mirth of the First Consul, my husband, and every one else who was present.

We were now at the period of New Year's gifts and visits, and I was admiring like a child, as I then was, all those brilliant and useless trifles, which custom demands should be offered by the gentlemen to a lady whose house they frequent, when two friends came to increase their number and added their good wishes, which were not merely the tribute of etiquette. They were General Suchet and his brother. After that sort of conversation which the occasion demanded, we fell into a discussion upon the merits of those family meetings which this season brought with it; and it was agreed that the celebration of Christmas, of New Year's and Twelfth-days, the birthday and saint's day of the head of the family, and other festivals, were favourable to the maintenance of domestic harmony, and were therefore worthy of being preserved. If the family is numerous, occasion is thus furnished for ten or twelve convivial meetings in the course of the year; and if the members have conceived any mutual offence, the embarrassment of meeting, otherwise than cordially, on the birthday of the grandmother or aunt, will often cause the coolness which had begun to take place to disappear, and slight disputes will thus be prevented from becoming serious quarrels. The two brothers were fully capable of appreciating such feelings; they were perfectly united; the General always displayed the tenderest friendship for his brother Gabriel, which the latter returned with the sincerest affection and respect; his love for his brother was that we feel for the object of our pride. In furtherance of these observations, the General proposed that we should meet on Twelfth-day, to which I assented with great satisfaction.

"Yes," said my good mother-in-law, who was never silent when a

project of pleasure was on foot, "we will by all means draw king and queen."—"Yes, let us draw," said Junot; "I engage you to sup here the evening after to-morrow upon a truffled turkey."—"Agreed," said General Suchet; "we will come here the evening after to-morrow, and then for the turkey, and truffles, the cake, the drawing, and plenty of laughter."

I was now in momentary expectation of my confinement, and notwithstanding the efforts of my mother-in-law to support and comfort me, looked forward to the moment with dread. In the night of the 4th of January we had an alarm, which called up my mother-in-law who had not undressed for a week past. Marchais was summoned, and pronounced that twenty-four or forty-eight hours would settle the business, and left me, recommending composure and sleep.

I was out of spirits during a part of the succeeding day; I performed my religious duties and wrote to my mother, because she had forbidden me to leave the house; I then arranged my baby-linen and basket, and in this occupation I found the entire dissipation of my fears and melancholy. In the little cap with its blue ribbons, and in the shirt, the sleeves of which I drew through those of the flannel waistcoat, I thought I could see the soft and fair head, and fat little mottled arms; in my joy I imagined the pretty clothes already adorning my promised treasure, and pressed them to my bosom, longing to clasp and to see my child, to feel its breath, while I said to myself, "And this little being which I expect will be all my own!" Oh! what days of joy were before me! Junot found me leaning over the cradle in a sort of ecstasy, and when I explained to him the cause of an emotion which his heart was well formed to understand, he embraced me with a tenderness which I felt prouder of than I should have done six months earlier.

My thoughts now took quite a different direction; I not only did not fear, but I desired the decisive moment; and when my friends met in the drawing-room they found me as gay and as happy as any young wife or young girl could be. Madame Hamelin formed one of our party. She was then young, gay, lively, and a most ready assistant in promoting that easy confidence which forms the great charm of intimate association. She had an original and striking wit, bordering a little on the maliciousness of the cat, and sometimes showing that she had tolerably long claws; but I believe that like puss also, she did not put them out unless attacked.

The evening passed off very cheerfully; my mother-in-law was delighted to see me in perfect oblivion of the critical moment, which, however, she knew could not be far distant. We sat down to table,

and the turkey, the cake, the madeira and champagne redoubled gaiety. In half an hour we laughed so heartily that even to this day I think of it with pleasure. At length came the moment of drawing; General Suchet sat beside me; I do not exactly recollect whether the prize of royalty fell to him or to me; since that time so many sovereignties, which seemed vastly more solid, have sunk into fantastical crowns, that my memory may well be excused its want of accuracy on this point. But whether the General had received his crown from me or whether he had made me his queen, he addressed me in a compliment so absurd, that it provoked a violent fit of laughter, with which the room resounded, and which was echoed with equal noise by seventeen or eighteen persons who surrounded the supper-table. I stood up to answer, with my glass of water, for I never in my life could drink wine, to the numerous glasses filled with sparkling champagne which were extended towards me, when I fell backwards into my chair, a frightful cry escaped me, and my glass dropped from my hand. But the sudden attack which had caused this commotion was over in an instant, my cheeks recovered their colour, and I looked up. Junot still paler than I had been, holding his glass of champagne, was looking at me with an air of consternation. The rest of the company seemed nearly equally alarmed, and the grotesque expression of so many countenances hardly recovered from a fit of hilarity, while, as in duty bound, they were assuming on the other side of their faces the solemnity which the circumstances appeared to require, resembling at once *Jean qui pleure* and *Jean qui rit*, produced so visible an effect that I relapsed into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. My mother-in-law now came behind my chair, and whispered, "Take my arm, my dear daughter, and come to your room."—"No, no!" said Gabriel Suchet, "we cannot spare our queen!"

Hereupon he began to relate a story so absurd that I laughed again as immoderately as before, and was again interrupted in the same manner; my mother-in-law told her son that I must be removed and a carriage sent for Marchais. Junot came to me; took me in his arms, and almost lifted me from my chair. This time the General interposed, offered to bet upon the sex of my child, and would with difficulty permit my husband to carry me away. He led me, however, to my room, obeying all my mother's behests with as much simplicity as any honest bourgeois, any M. Guillaume, or M. Dennis, of the Rue de la Perle, or Rue St. Jacques. He busied himself in regulating the heat of my room, in calling my women together, giving them fifty orders at once, which neither they nor he understood, ordered

the horses, and returned to my side already expecting to hear the cries of his child;—but I was in no such hurry.

During this tedious season of watching and anxiety Junot was almost distracted; he threw himself at intervals on the mattress which had been laid for him in the parlour, then got up, walked the room with hasty steps, crept to my bedroom-door and tried to get in, which I had positively prohibited, and returned to his apartment, where his aide-de-camp, General Lallemand, sat up with him all night endeavouring with arguments and consolations of friendship to calm a little the violence of his agitation and to restore something like composure to his mind.

Junot on leaving me by no means recovered his self-possession; he wandered through the rooms all opening into each other, which at both extremities brought him to one of the doors of my chamber, found repose in none of them, and at length unable longer to endure his confinement, snatched up a round hat which happened to meet his eye, and sallied forth into the street. Without once considering which way he was going, habit or instinct led him to the Tuileries, and he found himself in the great court without knowing how he had got there. Before ascending, however, the staircase leading to the First Consul's apartments, the consideration of his dishabille crossed his mind; but no matter, said he, as he looked down upon his brown coat, I am sure of finding here a heart which will understand my feelings.

All his comrades in the antechamber were astonished at the expression of his countenance and the disorder of his dress; but none of them felt any disposition to ridicule; and the First Consul, as soon as he heard that Junot wished to see him, sent for him into his cabinet. "Good God! what is the matter, Junot?" he exclaimed with surprise on seeing him. "General, my wife is in labour and I cannot stay at home," was the answer, but in a voice almost smothered with tears. "And you are come to me to seek courage; you are right, my friend. Poor Junot! how you are upset! Oh woman, woman!"

He required a relation of all that had happened from my first seizure, and though Junot dared not give utterance to his apprehensions, yet Napoleon gathered from all the facts he described that my life was actually in danger, and his conduct in this moment of anxiety, when his discernment penetrated into a mysterious horror, was that of the tenderest and best of brothers. "My old friend," said he, to his faithful and devoted servant, pressing his hand, a very

rare caress, "you have done right in coming to me at this moment, as I hope to prove."

So saying, he left his cabinet, and leaning upon Junot's arm, stepped into the saloon, where the statue of the great Condé stands, and walked up and down, talking of the only subject which interested his companion, for he was too well versed in the management of the human heart to interrogate chords, which would certainly have been mute at such a moment. Amongst other things, he asked my husband how he came to the Tuileries. "On foot," was the answer; "a species of desperation drove me from home, though my heart is still there, and I wandered hither without knowing which way I came."—"And may I ask you, then," said Napoleon, "why you look out of that window ten times in a minute, to see if any one passes the gate? How should they come here to seek you, if your servants do not know where you are? if your officers saw you come out in plain clothes? It seems to me that they are more likely to suspect you of throwing yourself into the river, than of coming here." He called and gave his orders.—"Send a footman immediately to Madame Junot's to learn whether she is yet put to bed; and if not, let the family be informed that General Junot is here."

He again took my husband's arm, and continued to converse with him with such affecting kindness, that Junot could not repress his tears. He was attached to his General, to that vision of glory which commanded admiration; but in such moments as the present, Napoleon's conduct could not fail to subject to him the whole heart and affections of the individual whose sufferings he thus alleviated, even if he had not been already devoted to him body and soul. This day rivetted, if I may say so, the chains which bound Junot to Napoleon.

Seeing him leave the house in a state bordering on distraction, Heldt, his German valet-de-chambre, followed him into the Tuileries, and on his return home informed the aide-de-camp, Laborde, where the General was to be found.

Junot had been three-quarters of an hour with the First Consul, whose arm rested on his, obliging him to remain a prisoner, when he would rather have been at large, and have had the power to come and learn the result of all his uneasiness. The footman could not yet be returned, when Junot, imboldened by the First Consul's goodness, begged to be allowed to inquire for him.—"I should have been told," answered the First Consul, "if he was returned. Remain quiet." Then dragging him still further on, they were presently in the gallery of Diana. There Junot's uneasiness became so violent,

that Napoleon several times looked at him with astonishment, and with an accent to which it is impossible to do justice, repeated: "Oh! woman, woman!"

At length, at the moment that Junot was about to escape without listening to any thing further, M. de Laborde appeared at the further end of the gallery; he had run with such haste that he could scarcely speak, but his countenance was full of joy.

"My General," he said, as soon as he had recovered his breath, "Madame Junot is safe in bed, and is as well as possible."—"Go, then, and embrace your *daughter*," said the First Consul, laying a stress on the word daughter; "if your wife had given you a boy they would have told you at once; but first of all embrace me," and he pressed him affectionately in his arms. Junot laughed and cried, and thoughtless of every thing but the event which had just occurred, was running away, when Napoleon said to him, "Stay, giddy-head, are you going to run through the streets without your hat?"

He returned to the First Consul's cabinet, where he had left his hat; the time was not yet come when the Prince of Neufchatel would have presumed to enter the Emperor's presence, even at three o'clock in the morning, without his coat buttoned, his ruffles, dress boots, and his plumed hat under his arm. "Give my love* to your wife, Junot, and tell her that I have a two-fold quarrel against her: first, because she has not given the republic a soldier, and secondly, because she has made me lose my wager with Josephine. But I shall not be the less her friend and yours." And again he pressed Junot's hand and let him go.

It would be impossible to describe the delirium of joy which was painted on Junot's countenance and actuated his manners when he returned to me. He bathed his daughter's little face with tears of delight so soft, so pure, that it was easy to see his happiness without his uttering a word. Then throwing himself on his knees beside my bed he took my hands, kissed them and thanked me for his child, his daughter, his little Josephine.

But notwithstanding his joy, Junot perceived that something weighed upon my heart, which was not connected with my past sufferings.

"What is the matter?" said he, embracing me again.—"Nothing, but a great deal of happiness."—"I know you, Laurette, I see the tears in your eyes, your heart is not at ease; what is the matter?"

I looked at him without answering; the tears rolled down my

* The words *tu feras mes amitiés* was a form of speech very often used by Napoleon to those he loved.

cheeks, but I would not speak. At this moment M. Marchais came in. "What! again?" he said to me. "My dear General, you should scold your wife, and the way I see you employed gives you additional right to do so!" Junot at this moment had his child in his arms and was embracing it. "You shall hear all then;—Oh, Madame Junot make no signs to me, I shall not heed them. You must know, then, General, that this young mother, who is a little heroine for courage, as soon as she was safely put to bed, and had learned that you were not at home, sent for your father that he might give his blessing to your child. I went myself to seek M. Junot, but he refused to come, as soon as he learnt that the infant was a girl. At length he was persuaded; but when Madame Junot, notwithstanding her weakness, took the babe in her arms to present it to him, saying, 'My father, bless your grand-daughter, it is another heart that will love you:' instead of embracing the child, he replied in a tone of vexation,

"It was not worth while to make all this noise about a naughty little girl. What is your husband to do with this little crying thing? He will give it a pretty reception. . . . .and the First Consul too! do you think he does not wish his Generals to have boys?" If I had any authority over your father, other than that of a physician in his patient's chamber, I confess I should have used it with some severity. I have frankly told you all this because it is a part of my duty, and because to-morrow, or the day after, a similar scene might have a fatal effect upon Madame Junot. It has affected her seriously, because she believes that the birth of a daughter is a great grievance to you, and it is in vain that I have represented to her that a mother of seventeen and a father of twenty-nine years of age will have time enough to pray for boys without being in despair at a first disappointment, and meanwhile the grandfather may fret as much as he pleases."

Scarcely had M. Marchais's first words struck Junot's ears than he understood the cause of my distress; and he seated himself upon my bed and wept with me, while he dried my eyes with his handkerchief and kisses.

Then taking up his daughter out of a little basket* of fine embroidered muslin, made on purpose that she might lie in it upon my bed, he placed her in my arms, and embraced us both with an air of such

* This Barcelonnette was the tasteful production of Mademoiselle Olive; in form of a swan, the feathers of which were embroidered in relief with white cotton; the wings a little spread, made a sort of handle to lift it by, the back was open, forming the cradle, and from its neck and reverted head fell a veil of white India muslin for the curtain, which was gathered up in the beak of the swan.

joyful delight, as left no doubt of the sentiments of his heart, which, however, never could be doubtful to me. But the first moment of my father-in-law's denunciation was terrible; no doubt he had no intention to injure me, but he might have killed me. "Mamma," said I to my mother-in-law, who just then came in, "you were right, you see; he loves it as well as if it had been a boy."

"Did not I tell you so?" replied this excellent woman. "My son's heart is too good and too noble to entertain the ideas his father would have given him credit for."

I have been led into some minute particulars connected with my first accouchement, in order to expose the falsehoods which the St. Helena Memorial has propagated. I am confident that the Emperor was wholly incapable of saying what is there attributed to him, in the chapter entitled "Junot and his wife."

Napoleon and his government enjoyed at this moment the fullest portion of popularity. The more violently France had been agitated by popular convulsion, the more heartily she rallied round a focus which presented the prospect of strength and repose. The more completely we had been disorganized, the more we required regularity of laws, institutions, and social arrangements, so true it is that order is the law of nature; there is an imperious tendency towards it in the heart of man which nothing can repress.

France threw herself into the arms of General Bonaparte with the sincerity of those who having long suffered, see at length the term of their sorrows. It was believed that the bravest soldier and most renowned warrior must prove the most capable of administering the government with justice, and of making us respected abroad. At this period Bonaparte did not like the English, but he wished to add to his triumphal crown the olive of peace; and to attain this end he wrote to King George the Third, that remarkable letter, in which he solicits him, for the happiness of the world, to give peace to the struggling nations. "Let us terminate," said he, "the war which for eight years has ravaged the four quarters of the world. Must it be eternal? Is there no means of coming to a mutual understanding?"

Public opinion in France was then strongly in favour of a war with England. Commerce was oppressed, the finances were in disorder; but from the commencement of the Revolution the voice of commerce had had very little weight in the republic. Every thing wore a warlike aspect, and arms only were looked to, to terminate a quarrel, appease troubles, and remove dangers. France was entirely military, and General Bonaparte, in calling for men to carry the war into England, would have been answered by two hundred thousand

volunteers. He had, therefore, no occasion to dissemble, nor did the failure of this first attempt at pacification rest with him. England herself repulsed the overture, while Mr. Pitt continued at the head of affairs. "In no case treat with that man," said the English Minister, in the House of Commons. In rejecting the First Consul's proposition he thought he had performed a great deed: his rival smiled; he also had his projects, and this refusal to treat forwarded them. The vision which for fourteen years he followed, even then had its influence on his actions; and seeing himself surrounded by so many young men, all burning for glory and victory, he did not doubt but England would be his,—and he prepared in earnest to invade her: fortune afterwards offered him the conquest of the world, and the army which Marshal Soult had organized at Boulogne was employed in dealing as murderous, though not such direct blows upon British power. But it was in vain for England to refuse peace. Abandoned by Russia, even after the assassination of Paul I., she felt the necessity of complying; Mr. Pitt forsakes the helm, Lord Melville and Lord Grenville follow his example, alleging that they will not be the instruments of executing a treaty which must be inglorious and injurious to the nation. Under a new administration the preliminaries of peace were at length signed at London, in October, 1801, a concord which was to last but two years.

It was about this time that the First Consul, in a conversation, of which I possess a sketch, observed, "The death of Paul I. dissolved the confederation of the north, but it may be revived, and if England, to avert this, should lavish her gold to an extent that will involve herself in a career of dangers, the commencement of which will be visible, but not the end——Well!——" Here he paused and smiled, and then resumed his promenade, rubbing his forehead, and crossing his hands behind him; all this giving to those who were studying his countenance the conviction that his thoughts were great and glorious.

Soon after this time the preliminaries of peace were signed with the Ottoman Court, whose alliance with France dates from the reign of Francis I., and had met with but few interruptions. The First Consul was not then sufficiently familiar with the English language to read the newspapers with facility; they were translated for him, but as he found they were not always given him faithfully, he determined to perfect himself in English, that he might judge of the originals; he did not, however, fully accomplish this end till a much later period. I remember that one day when the Turkish treaty was in progress, Napoleon coming into the saloon at Malmaison, where the company were assembling before dinner, with some English journals in his

hand, said to the Second Consul:—"Citizen Cambacérès, do you know why I went to Egypt?" Cambacérès looked attentively at him, but being unable to penetrate the object of this question, put in so unexpected a manner, he was silent. "Yes," continued the First Consul, "I should like to know whether any of you divine the true motive which induced me to go to Egypt? You Junot, Duroc, Berthier, my poor Rapp, and yourself, Cambacérès, I have no doubt that you believe it was to flatter the fancies of certain learned enthusiasts in antiquities, who would sacrifice an army to obtain a marble column from Palmyra, or a mummy from Thebes; "and so saying, he struck the back of his hand upon the English newspaper, in which he had just been reading this stupid nonsense, and added, "To be sure these few lines do give me an additional object, that of making myself King of Jerusalem! Really it is a very amusing thing to read such folly!—King of Jerusalem! forsooth!" Here he burst into a loud fit of laughter, perhaps the only one to which I knew him give way during the twenty years that I was admitted to his society. His gaiety never showed itself in noise. Nor did his anger, terrible as it was; he could strike as with thunder, and persons in the next room would know nothing of the words which fell upon the offender with the weight of a club, or the sharpness of a sword.

Cambacérès seeing that the First Consul was disposed to amuse himself with the affair, took up the ball, and answered like a man of wit, as he actually was.—"Well, General," said Regnault de Saint-Jean-d'Angely, who was also that day at Malmaison, "I do not see any thing ironical in the journal. It is true the English writer intended to be malicious, but it appears to me he has failed in his object. Why should Godfrey de Bouillon alone be entitled to his recompense?"

I know not what sentiment these words touched, but the First Consul's brow was clouded in an instant. Had his thoughts not yet turned upon absolute power? Or did he wish they should not be suspected if such existed already? But his change of countenance, the expression of his eye, and the knitting of his brow, were too striking not to be noticed by those who made him their study. The cloud, however, was transient, his features in an instant resumed their usual cast, and he replied to Regnault with a smile:—"Truly you do us republican soldiers great honour in comparing us with the crusaders. But who should be the Rinaldo of the adventure?" then looking round him, "Berthier, the palm is yours; but no, your Armida was not in Egypt. Junot, you are fond of running after the pretty women—but hush, Madame Junot is here, we must say nothing on that sub-

ject, though I suppose she knows she was not your first love. Do you know that your husband kept a complete seraglio in those distant quarters, Madame Junot?" "He has told me something of the kind, General; and I have even a very pretty portrait hanging over the chimney-piece in my room." With this the conversation ended; Napoleon, casting an indefinable glance towards me, resumed his rapid promenade, and passed into the garden.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

The society of artists and literary men—Talma's gaiety—The poet d'Offreville and his self-conceit—The tragedy of Statira—The hoax projected—Talma's part in it, and the intended lecture—The dinner-party—The Improvisation—Party to the Theatre—Tiercelin and "the Farce and no Farce"—D'Offreville an unintentional Performer—The lost Manuscript—The poet's despair and good appetite—The poet in the cabriolet, and the vicious mare—His lamentations—The hackney coachman.

I HAVE always been fond of the society of artists and literary men; we feel at once security and pleasure in it. In whatever situation fortune has placed me, I have made it my principal study to assemble round me the chief talents of the day. Amongst a crowd of distinguished men I had the happiness of receiving Nadermann, Garat, Denon, Girodet, Lefebvre, old Robert, Lemercier, Millin, M. Delille, Talma, and many others.

The last name upon this list reminds me of an adventure in which Talma played a part, certainly not that of Cinna or Orestes. To what perfection he carried those characters of parade with which French tragedy abounds, is well known; but of the time I am speaking he was immersed in the gloom of those English tragedies which he rendered so terrible, and the contrast made his gaiety in society, which provoked the cheerfulness of all around, peculiarly striking.

My readers may remember a certain M. d'Offreville, who lived like a salamander in a perpetual fire at Lucien Bonaparte's mansion of Plessis, and continued to fatigue every one with his vanity and absurdity. On my marriage, he presented himself to me with an epithalamium in each pocket, and an acrostic upon every one of Junot's names and mine; there was no resisting this folly.

His stupid self-conceit made him completely ridiculous, and re-

strained every sentiment of commiseration which otherwise his age would have demanded. He was the butt of all his acquaintances.

After pronouncing a fine eulogium on himself, he would walk up and down the room majestically, with one hand in his waistcoat pocket, and the other playing with the laced shirt-frill, which was in keeping with the other ornaments of his dress, his plaited ruffles, silk stockings, and buckled shoes.

He had composed a tragedy, on which he had bestowed ten years' labour, to very little purpose; but he would rather have renounced his hopes of salvation in another life, than have believed that any production in the world could be equal to his *Statira*.— "Faith!" said Junot, one day, "this man must be mystified; his incorrigible vanity deserves punishment."

He furnished us with the opportunity in a very few days. He came one morning to request I would perform a promise which, in a moment of gaiety, I had thoughtlessly made him, of procuring Talma's permission to have Statira read before the committee of French comedy.

I was much embarrassed, for I would not for the world have spoke of this production to Talma, Dugazon, or Fleury. I answered that I should shortly see one of these gentlemen, and would report the answer; but the good poet was not so easily satisfied, and he so strongly insisted on my giving him a letter of introduction to one or the other of the committee, that I was really puzzled in what manner to put him off; when fortunately Junot came in and at once extricated me from my difficulties.

"Your work shall be read next week, M. d'Offreville," said he in a solemn tone, "it shall be read at my house, by Talma himself."

"Oh, General! you are too good! Oh, heavens! my work read at Madame Junot's, at your house, my dear General! and by Talma himself! it is too much!" Here was the poet in a delirium of joy, at the idea of his tragedy being read by Talma. I could not understand Junot, but in two words he let me into the secret. The day was fixed, Junot arranged the whole affair, and communicated his project to Talma, who willingly undertook to second it. Our party consisted of the two Baptistes of the French comedy, Talma and his wife, Fleury, Dugazon and Dazincourt. It was agreed that Talma, as soon as he saw d'Offreville, should speak to him of his tragedy, of the part he wished to take in it, and of the pleasure he should have in reading it after dinner. This latter point was quite another matter, however.

I never saw such an expression of extraordinary joy as that which was portrayed on d'Offreville's burlesque physiognomy, when on my

introducing him to Talma, the latter addressed him with the most hyperbolical praises of his work, with an air of seriousness which was enough to make those acquainted with d'Offreville die of laughing. He bowed, thanked him in broken words, and in the most rapturous terms concluded by pronouncing Talma divine.

I think I never was present at a more amusing dinner party in my life. The champagne and madeira soon put him into excellent spirits, and he proposed favouring us with an *improvisation*, which he had been preparing from the day he had been assured that Talma would read his tragedy; but as it was to pass for an impromptu, he had taken good care not to bring his written paper with him, never suspecting his memory of treachery. But the wine he had drank, and the noisy mirth which surrounded him, had so confused his ideas, that after giving the two first lines their highest effect, after shading his eyes, and enacting all the monkey tricks necessary to produce a belief in an actual *improvisation*, he stopped short, wholly unable to recollect another word. The total silence in which the whole party were listening to his recitation and awaiting its continuation, added to his embarrassment, and made him look absolutely stupified. After an interval of becoming solemnity, General Lallemand interrupted the silence: "Indeed, M. d'Offreville," said he, "it is a sad thing that you cannot *recollect* any more of your *improvisation*." "I beg your pardon," said he, "I shall continue immediately;" and he again repeated the two unfortunate lines,

> "Say Muse, loved Talma! does thy voice divine
> Deign with immortal fame my verse to crown—"

"My verse to crown,—my verse to crown," and he would have harped upon the same unharmonious string for an hour, if Talma had not cried out in his inimitable accent,

> "While Tyre's proud walls re-echo my renown."

Now this happened to be a line in the famous tragedy of Statira; Junot had whispered it to Talma, who pronounced it instantly, to the admiration of the company. But d'Offreville saw nothing ludicrous in it; on the contrary, he was ready to worship the man who was already master of the finest passage of his tragedy. "Is not that poetry of inspiration?" said he to Talma; "how your talent will shine in performing so brilliant a character as that of my hero! You are supremely fortunate, my dear sir! But, let me beg you to give

me the unutterable pleasure of hearing these fine lines read with such judgment as yours: here is the piece."

And he drew from his pocket the much honoured Statira, wrapped in vellum, and tied with fresh bows of rose-coloured ribbon. This last folly was almost too much for the gravity of the company. Talma was still holding his cup of coffee in his hand, when the simpleton gravely proposed to him to read five acts of pathos consecutively. Talma, in reply, took him by the arm, and leading him and me to the recess of a window a little out of the noise, said to him, "My dear Sir, I understand from Madame Junot and the General, that your work is full of beauties: now I should wish to read this *chef-d'œuvre* with all the attention it merits, and to be listened to with the respect I should demand for it. At present this is impossible; do you see those wild fellows, Baptiste the younger, and Dugazon—"

The latter was at this moment relating to his auditors, that he had once been aide-de-camp to the Commune of Paris, and describing his adventures in this capacity in the most laughable manner. "I therefore recommend," continued Talma, "that Madame Junot should indulge us with a promenade in the Bois de Boulogne or elsewhere; we shall converse while we are out upon literary and theatrical subjects, and when we return in the cool of the evening, our minds will be composed and prepared to enjoy the delightful impressions which the reading of Statira promises, and which I engage to assist with my best abilities."

I seconded the motion, and Madame Talma supported us, so that d'Offreville, however anxious for the commencement of the lecture, had no remedy, and as it was only a pleasure deferred, it was tolerably well received. I rang and ordered the horses, which were already harnessed to three carriages.

On my return to the saloon equipped for the ride, Junot approached me, and said, in a perfectly natural tone, "I understand, my dear, that you intend to take a ride; in my opinion, you had better pass an hour or two at the Théâtre Montansier, where they are performing a new piece, which I am told is charming. My box is not lent, and I will borrow that of the manager, and M. D. . . . ." The name was an invention intended only to deceive d'Offreville, who would have supposed a scheme laid against himself if he had found several boxes hired beforehand: he was foolish, but not stupid.

Junot's proposition carried the day by acclamation, and we set out for the Théâtre Montansier, then at the Palais-Royal. D'Offre-

ville was put under the care of M. Charles, M. Lallemand, and M. Delaborde, first aide-de-camp to Junot; on reaching the theatre, he proposed to join me in my box for the pleasure of conversing with Talma, but this was not exactly the intended plan. "No, no," said these gentlemen, "Madame Junot's box is full; you are going with us into one where you will see excellently."

Hereupon they made a preconcerted signal to the door-keeper, who opened the stage-box to the right of the audience; General Lallemand and M. Delaborde pushed d'Offreville into the box and shut the door, leaving him *tête-à-tête* with a man whom he did not know, and whose appearance was almost as singular as his own. This man was dressed in a scarlet cloth coat with copper buttons, yellow breeches, striped stockings, an immense cravat, a powdered wig with a great cue, and a three-cornered hat badly cocked, which he took off and put on again ten times in a minute.

D'Offreville, to whom his conductors had said, "We shall return presently," waited patiently the commencement of the piece. The curtain drew up; but an actor in his stage dress came forward to announce, that the principal actress being extremely ill, the performance could not take place. "What!" cried d'Offreville's neighbour in the red coat, with a hoarse voice, "what do you mean by that? I have paid three francs and a half to see the show, and I will see or . . . . ." And here he stood up leaning over the front of the box, and vociferating his words in a great rage: "Sir," said d'Offreville to him, pulling one of his red skirts, "it is not usual to talk in this manner here; they will turn you out, sir."—"Hem! what is this fellow saying?" And, turning towards d'Offreville, the man in the red coat burst out a laughing. "Ah! I know you very well! You come from the Estrapade;* you compose tragedies to make people laugh."—"Sir, sir," said d'Offreville, "pray speak lower!" And he attempted to effect a retreat, but in vain; the door would not open; for General Lallemand, M. Delaborde, and M. Charles were behind holding it fast.

At this moment a voice from the gallery shouted out, "James! James!" and James, who was the man in the red coat, looked up and answered:—"Ah! ah! is it you, John? come here, my lad, here is plenty of room, come here."

And the accent and attitude of the waterman of the fens was perfect: for by this time my readers will have guessed that the man in the scarlet coat was Tiercelin the actor, and that the farce they

* The Rue de l'Estrapade in Paris.

were performing was "The Farce and no Farce," represented for the second time only. Tiercelin, who was in the secret, played his part excellently, and what made the joke perfect, from my box where we could see the whole, was, that the audience in the pit took the introduction of d'Offreville for a new scene, and every time he leant forward to Tiercelin to give his advice, several voices cried out "Louder!" The poor author of Statira stood as much in dread of these cries of his terrible neighbour, who seeing the impression he made upon him, gave him from time to time, a most menacing glance. "Oh!" said he, "I have told you I know you, you come from the Estrapade. You should cry out, like John and I, upon these thieves, who take our money and give us nothing for it."

The piece proceeded. Tiercelin or James, as he is called, was furnished with a gourd, out of which he drank five or six times during the act. Generally he had nothing in his gourd, but it happened that evening, having a bad cold, the gourd contained barley water. When he saw the apprehension with which he inspired d'Offreville, it came into his head, to our great gratification, to offer him his gourd, recommending him to drink to recover himself, and to our still greater delight, the other took it, so much was he afraid of his companion, and tasting, notwithstanding his expectation of having his throat burnt with peppered brandy, was not a little surprised at swallowing nothing but warm water fit to make him sick. He drank, however, what was in the gourd, amidst the encouragements of Tiercelin, and the reiterated applauses of the pit, which would have been delighted with this unexpected scene, if the new actor could have been persuaded to speak louder.

But D'Offreville at length discovered the joke, and immediately precipitated himself, head foremost, like a ram in a rage, against the box door, and so furious was he, that when the gentlemen outside opened it, he pushed through without seeing them. But he was not to escape thus, and all the young men of the conspiracy surrounding him, he found himself without the power of counteraction once more in my drawing-room in the presence of Talma. When he commenced his complaints, we all told him he did not know what he was talking about; that the box he had been put into was the manager's, who had given an order to one of the common people, a waterman, who, it would seem, lived in the Rue de l'Estrapade and knew him, which he had given him to understand by his manner, rather vulgarly to be sure: "But," said Junot, "if I were you, I should be very proud of being recognized thus, and for an author, even by people the most remote from your ordinary associates! D'Offreville, I should look

upon the meeting with this waterman the most honourable homage to your great talents."

It would be absurd to make such stupid speeches to a man who understood it as irony; but D'Offreville was persuaded to see in this adventure a circumstance of which he had a right to be proud; whether it were Tiercelin, or plain James of the Estrapade, on this point he could not divest himself of some doubt, but the actor or the waterman had said, "You compose tragedies!" This was enough to make him forget the warm water and the suspicious character which had been forced upon him.

"And when you are named on the day of the first representation of Statira," said Madame Talma, "when, having made a sufficient resistance to the demands of an impatient audience, my husband and I will lead you between us upon the stage, that the whole house may be able to see you——a different homage will then be rendered to your talents!" D'Offreville listened eagerly, and seemed to enjoy in anticipation the ecstasy of his triumph. "But what is M. Talma about and our Statira," said he, casting a glance of intelligence on M. Talma.

"Here am I," said Talma; "but where is the manuscript? Come, prepare the table, two wax lights, and a glass of sugared water.—— But, M. d'Offreville, be so good as to give me your manuscript; for though I have retained many beautiful lines of this immortal work, I have not learnt it by heart."—But D'Offreville was more ridiculous at this moment than he had been at any preceding part of the entertainment. His cherished manuscript was lost!—nor could he recover it.—The truth was, that I had stolen it from the spot where he had concealed it, as the only means of avoiding the lecture.—"My Statira," he exclaimed in a kind of phrensy, as if he was calling his mistress, "my Statira!"

At length supper was announced. D'Offreville at first in despair, found comfort in making a capital meal, a talent which seldom failed him. They afterwards made him recite some madrigals, and two or three acrostics upon Laura and Andoche; then he repeated, as a child does his lesson, the letter he had received from Voltaire; and, before rising from table, he had become quite as vain-glorious, and as complete a braggart as ever. But when after supper his dear Statira was restored to him, when he had found, upon examination, that not a single absurdity was wanting to it, he proceeded to utter such a tissue of nonsense, that Junot cried out in great wrath:

"This man is absolutely incorrigible."—"I have seen many such characters," said Talma, "but never one so thoroughly ridiculous."

Did not he wish to have his precious production read after sup-

per?—"We shall see about that some day next week," said Talma, "for to-night, or rather this morning, I entreat you to excuse me."—It was already two o'clock.—"And how am I to return home?" said the little man. "You know that Madame d'Offreville would die of grief if any harm should happen to me." This apostrophe was addressed to me in a somewhat petulant tone; for he could not forgive me the occurrences of the day, though I was no otherwise concerned in them than as having shared the general mirth. "You know," he continued, "all the tenderness of that incomparable woman!"

The fact was, that the wife was quite as ridiculous as her husband; I dare say they were attached to each other, but to make a parade of love, when their joint ages amounted to a hundred and fifty years, was of itself absurdity enough.—"Well," said M. Charles, "I am going to drive you home in my cabriolet."—"No, no, I shall," said General Lallemand. M. Delaborde interfered with, "I propose myself that honour." "If M. d'Offreville will trust himself with me?" chimed in M. Bardin.

M. d'Offreville looked at them all in turn; the remembrance of the misadventures of the evening made him tremble; but he found M. Charles's countenance the most inviting—he determined to confide himself to his care; and making low bows to M. Talma, who bent still more profoundly in return, he ascended the slight cabriolet of M. Charles, to which was harnessed a little mare, known as the most vicious brute in Paris. To his other follies, D'Offreville added that of being fearful in a carriage, and his apprehension was converted into absolute terror when the cabriolet took, with the speed of an arrow, the road to the Pont-Royal.

"Good God," cried M. Charles, "what will become of us, the horse is running away; I have no power over it."—"Sir, I conjure you, I entreat you—a wife who adores me, sir, is waiting for me.... I beseech you, sir!"—"What would you have me do?" said M. Charles, slightly touching the flanks of the mare with the whip; "what would you have me do? you see I have no command of the mare.... she is running away.... that's certain.... God grant that she may not drag us to the river!"—"M. Charles, let me alight.... You are a worthy man, you would not kill me.... Good heavens! here we are upon the bridge!"

"Well, so much the better; it proves that we shall not go under it; you see there is nothing to fear now.——Will you be quiet?——by Jove, you will put me in a passion presently!" exclaimed M. Charles, half angry and half laughing, for the old poet was crying for help.

"Oh, what will become of me!" muttered d'Offreville, almost crying, "and my wife, my poor wife?"—"Ah! you shall see your wife again, by and by," said M. Charles; "only let me get home, then I will pack you into a hackney coach and you shall return home to console your wife, who is no doubt fast asleep without thinking of you."—"And do you live far off, my worthy friend? Heavens! how the cabriolet sways! Do you live far off?"

"In the Rue des Maturins."—"The Rue des Maturins, then I shall not get home before five o'clock in the morning!" "Be quiet, will you, and let me drive the mare without meddling with the reins; and we shall arrive presently."

At last they reached the Rue Neuve des Maturins. But that which was not the least amusing part of the adventure to M. Charles was the anger of the hackney coachman to whose care he now confided d'Offreville, particularly as they both stood and looked at his whimsical and disordered dress, besmeared with powder that had fallen from his hair. The coachman said he would not take charge of a mask and disguised person at a time when there was no carnival. D'Offreville, amongst whose pretensions was that of being very eloquent, undertook to persuade the man to drive him home by speaking of his wife and her love, himself and his talent; and afterwards boasted of his success as a triumph of his oratorical powers. "The Muses," said he, "touched my lips, like Pindar's, with milk and honey."

The truth was, that M. Charles, unknown to his companion, had put a crown piece into the coachman's hand.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Creation of the kingdom of Etruria—The King and Queen of Etruria in Paris—Their son—Fêtes and balls given to them at Paris—Fêtes of Messieurs Talleyrand, Chaptal and Berthier—Napoleon accompanies the King to see a representation of Œdipus—First Consul's opinion of the new King—Aristocratic measure respecting lists of eligible persons opposed by Napoleon.

We have now attained a new and memorable epoch in our history, that of the re-establishment of thrones and of religion. The foundation of several republics was the work of General Bonaparte; when at the head of an army not yet his subjects, his moderation procured him even more renown than his victories. Now that his powerful

hand directed the destinies of France, he attempted to set up a petty crown, to place a baby sceptre in the hands of a man incapable of reigning, as if he would say to France, already unaccustomed to sovereignty—"See what a king is! Be not afraid of the phantom!"

This monarch, whose new dignity procured for him more ridicule than respect, was the King of Etruria, Don Louis, infant of Parma, nephew of Queen Marie Antoinette,* and husband of the infant Maria Louisa Josephine, daughter of Charles IV. They came to Paris in the month of May, 1801, to thank the First Consul for the nomination to the crown of Etruria, which was a stipulated clause of the treaty concluded between France and Spain on the 21st of March, at Madrid. By this treaty France acquired the Duchy of Parma, and ceded Tuscany to the Prince; giving him, as an indemnity for his paternal inheritance, the territory we had conquered from his uncle. But the king, Louis I., was very possibly ignorant who was the sovereign of Tuscany before it fell to his share; and had he known it, I am by no means certain that he would, on that account, have refused the crown.

I never beheld two more extraordinary persons than these new sovereigns. They assumed the incognito of Count and Countess of Livurnia, and brought with them a *Countling*, who, though not quite three years old, was made of more importance than both his illustrious parents put together. Those who have not seen this royal personage at five years of age, in full court dress, a hat and feathers under his arm; a sword at his side, decorated with a huge bunch of ribands; his poor little locks powdered and frizzed, confined in a bag wig, driven through the streets of Florence, on the front seat of a state carriage, and though fastened to his cushion, rolling from right to left like a little ball; the Queen Dowager, his mother, riding backwards, in the most respectful attitude; whoever has not beheld this spectacle has missed one of those exquisitely ridiculous scenes which prolong laughter till it becomes painful. Of the time I am speaking, as the King his father was still living, the Prince Royal of Etruria was content to give his little hand to be kissed, whether asked for or not. As for his parents, all who remember their arrival and sojourn in Paris in 1801, will agree with me, how totally dissimilar they were from all other human beings, especially if her Majesty, the Queen, is to be compared with a woman of even moderate beauty, or the King with a man possessed of a single idea. One proof, if any were

* Marie Thérèse had four daughters. They were married to the King of Naples, the King of France, the Duke of Parma, and to the Duke of Saxe-Teschen.

wanting, and which was not lost upon France, how utterly he was void, not only of all the mental faculties, but also of those of the heart, was the abandonment of his paternal inheritance to take up with the spoils of his uncle.

Fêtes were given to the King of Etruria, not from any regard to the new fangled monarch, but from a spontaneous desire to meet the wishes of the First Consul, who well knew how to appreciate the sentiments which dictated the attention. The reception given to his tributary king, who was come to tender to the republic homage for his crown, was at once magnificent and in good taste. He was, in the first instance, entertained at Malmaison, in the spirit of cordiality.

The First Consul wished to become acquainted with the character of the man, on whom he had bestowed a polished people, hallowed by the noblest monuments of art and science: a very few interviews sufficed to prove that he was nullity personified. Not so, the Queen. Her appearance was at first repulsive; but on further acquaintance, when she had thrown aside a timidity, partaking in some degree of stateliness, which threw a restraint over her words and actions, she proved to be very agreeable.

M. de Talleyrand was the first of the ministers who gave a fête to the new sovereigns. It was in the month of June, when the country was in its highest beauty. The entertainment was therefore given at Neuilly. Taste and ingenuity were displayed in all the arrangements, but both were lost upon him for whose enjoyment the whole was chiefly intended. The fête was Florentine, and its illusion complete. The beautiful square of the Pitti Palace was admirably represented, and when their Majesties descended to the garden they were surrounded by crowds of pretty Tuscan peasant girls, offering them flowers, singing couplets, and enticing the royal pair into their groups, to hear verses in their own praise. This was followed by the famous improvisator Gianni, prophesying for them in fine Italian verse a long and prosperous reign. All this made no impression on King Louis. The Queen, who alone understood it, made acknowledgments for both.

The finest of these fêtes was that given by the minister of the interior. He had not, like M. de Talleyrand, the advantage of a villa in the country, but his garden was skilfully laid out, to bear the appearance of a park, and the whole scene reminded one of fairy land. Three hundred and fifty ladies found seats in that fine gallery, where Lucien, in the preceding year, had given such agreeable balls; which, pleasant as they were, certainly afforded no presage of M. Chaptal's evening of enchantment. The First Consul was enrap-

tured; and though seldom known to take notice of such matters, not only expressed his satisfaction at the time, but long afterwards reverted to the invisible singers, and the ravishing harmony of M. Chaptal's gardens. Yet here, as at Neuilly, all the delicate courtesies shown in honour of the sovereigns, were appreciated by the Queen alone: the poor King could not find a word of thanks for so much pains expended on fêting and pleasing him: even when in the midst of a Tuscan village, where Tuscan peasants were singing in chorus the beautiful lines of Tasso and Petrarch, which he could scarcely fail of understanding, a crown of flowers was offered him, accompanied by flattering verses, still not a syllable could he say;—the same eternal and unmeaning smile, which seemed to express that he could not comprehend even the language and scenery of Italy, still sat upon his lips.

In the dance his Tuscan Majesty was really amusing. I had the honour of figuring near him at the ball given by the Minister of War, on the anniversary of the battle of Marengo, and congratulate myself on my wonderful self-control in preserving my gravity through the whole country dance. The King, dancing with Queen Hortense, skipped and jumped about in a manner by no means beseeming the royal dignity. In one of his capers a buckle from his shoe suddenly flew into the air, and alighted in my head dress; and so highly was the King's mirth excited by its course and final resting place, that he was nearly choked with laughter. We were little less diverted when, on examination of the buckle, to ascertain how it had found its way from the royal foot to my head, we discovered that it had been only glued to the shoe. This fête of the Minister of War acquired a peculiar character from the supper being served in the garden, under tents, with all the military appendages of a bivouac, and from the illusive charm imparted by the glorious day which this fête was intended to recall. The fire-works were so designed as to show to the First Consul that the army which surrounded him could honour him alone. A balloon was sent up in the course of the night, which, against the dark azure of a clear sky, luminously traced, as it rose, the name of Marengo.

One evening during the King of Etruria's stay in Paris, the First Consul accompanied him to the Comédie Française. The play was Œdipus. The house was crowded to excess. All Paris was desirous to see, side by side, General Bonaparte, who as a private individual had created republics, and the King he was crowning, now that he was himself chief of the most powerful republic in the world. The manners of the new King were especially amusing when contrasted

with those of the First Consul, who was always calm, serious, and well calculated to stand the gaze of millions. When Philoctetes repeated the line, "I have made sovereigns, but have refused to be one," the noise of the acclamations with which the theatre resounded was almost alarming. The whole house was shaken by applauding feet, while the box audience, who seldom take part in such scenes, unanimously joined the cheers of the pit. It was the universal nation expressing to Napoleon the sentiment which filled all hearts. As for the King he started at first in his arm-chair, then laughed most complacently on observing all hands and eyes directed towards the box where he sat with the First Consul. But the mirth of those who knew him was complete when, finding the applause prolonged, he thought politeness required some mark of attention in return for such unequivocal proofs of an interest he was quite proud, as he said, of inspiring in so great a people, and he rose to make his best obedience. "Poor King!" said the First Consul, shrugging his shoulders. These words, "Poor King!" appear the more contemptuous from his mouth, covered as he was with laurels, and all radiant with the glory of his great deeds. But on all occasions a word either of praise or contempt has appeared to me more impressive from him than from other men.

After a visit of some weeks the King and Queen of Etruria quitted Paris and proceeded to their own kingdom of perfumes, where they were received and installed in their throne by Murat. "The rising generation," said the First Consul one day, laughing, "were unacquainted with the face of a King; well, we have shown them one." But his countenance instantly recovered its seriousness, and he added, "Poor Tuscany! Poor Tuscany!"

Shortly before the arrival of the King of Etruria in Paris, an aristocratic measure was under discussion—that of the lists of eligibility relative to elections, the object of which was to fill all official posts with select persons.

Cambacérès, strange as it may seem, pronounced strongly in favour of the lists, and the First Consul held a long discussion with him. Napoleon said that the lists were founded on a bad system and on false and erroneous principles. "France," said he, "is a great power; but it is the people who compose that power. This law, although a part of the constitution, is not, therefore, the less bad and absurd. It is not fifty, sixty, or even a hundred men, assembling together in a moment of tumult and excitement, who have a right to make a constitution, and to alienate the rights of the people.——The sovereignty of the people is inalienable." These are the very

words of Napoleon; they were written in pencil by him who gave them to me, and he wrote them as they fell from the First Consul. Did they truly interpret his sentiments?

CHAPTER LXXX.

Institution of the legion of honour—Difficulties encountered by the First Consul—Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely—My Mother's conversation on the projected institution with Junot—The concordat—Cardinals Gonsalvi and Spina—M. de Talleyrand authorised by the Pope to leave the secular state and return to the laical community—Ratification of the concordat—Creation of Bishops by Napoleon—Religious ceremony in honour of the concordat—Display of female beauty—Offensive remark of General Delmas upon the ceremony—My uncle Bién-Aymé consecrated Bishop of Metz—His conversation with Napoleon.

It was some weeks previous to this incident, that the establishment of the legion of honour, one of the most remarkable events of the whole domination of Napoleon, was first talked of. This affair doubtless made an impression, but less than proportionate to the difficulty with which it had been effected. It would not, perhaps, have been possible to have achieved the victory so early, had not the First Consul been powerfully seconded by Regnault de St. Jean-d'Angely, a man of great ability, whose portrait is necessary here, as his name will be found in every page of Napoleon's history. Regnault having, like nearly all the members of the constituent assembly and of the convention, taken a denomination from the place of his residence, was, as his name indicates, from Saint-Jean-d'Angely, where however his parents, who belonged to that class known before the Revolution as the *bonne bourgeoisie*, had but recently established themselves. They intended their son for a merchant, but the young man determined otherwise for himself; and finding his parents inexorable, quitted the paternal mansion, where no better prospect than an insufferable slavery awaited him, to wander he knew not whither. Happily he met a family friend, who, entering into his character and feelings, and being desirous to save both him and his parents from eternal regret, brought him back to his home, and induced them to educate him for the bar. Thus was laid the foundation of Regnault's success. He studied, and very soon displayed a brilliant and original eloquence, combined with a force of reasoning which placed him at once on a

level with the most distinguished orators. Napoleon, who knew how to discriminate between talent and mediocrity, designed Regnault, from the moment he heard him speak, for one of the orators of his council of state. Regnault, on his part, also judged the colossus; and, strange to say, in many instances fathomed his real thoughts through the veil with which, though Napoleon was not deceitful, his simple and vigorous ideas were frequently covered. Regnault, in listening to discussions introduced by the First Consul, seldom coincided in the opinion first mooted by him; he opposed it; and curiously enough, generally found himself maintaining the side of the argument which Napoleon really intended to preponderate. If this was the effect of address, it was excusable.

The question of the legion of honour, on its first proposition, excited feelings and discussions of which, in the present day, it is impossible to convey an idea. The creation of an order of knighthood, in a country filled with republican institutions and resolved on equality, appeared at first, even to those who from their reputation in arms were entitled to be chiefs of the order, a sort of monstrosity. None of them had even imagined that the First Consul would one day assume the sovereignty of the state. I do not think that the consulate for life had yet been talked of; Napoleon now held the office for ten years only. "Well! after all," said my mother to Junot, "I assure you, my dear son, a green, red, or blue ribbon is a very pretty thing over a black coat or a white waistcoat. I am fond of these talismans of ambition. Our poor weak human nature is always travelling in a circle; we are carried forward by the rotatory motion, and obliged to abandon position after position, as we perform the revolution, till we find ourselves brought back to the very point from whence we started; here for instance are you almost a courtier under a republican government! This does not surprise me, for I have seen the pro-consuls of the committee of public safety keep the notables of the highest merit waiting in their antechambers, and that because the said pro-consuls were sensible of their own inferiority, and revenged it in the only manner of which a mind of mean calibre is capable. The directory had its chamberlains and equerries; because the halls of the Luxembourg contained throngs who sought to fill those offices with an eagerness truly edifying. The Consular Court is now rising with an éclat far surpassing its predecessors. You will agree with me, that unless power possesses both the will and the means to make itself respected, it is indispensable to surround it with a sort of theatrical splendour to prevent its becoming an object of mockery. Bonaparte is a man of sense and tact; he

understands all this, and reduces it to practice. You will see where all this will end—" and my mother gently nodded her head, as she changed her position on the sofa; for at that time, in compliance with the decree of her physicians, she scarcely ever rose from it. Junot's demeanour as he listened to her harangue was droll; he saw plainly that she was jesting, but as he did not himself entirely approve this measure at the outset, he was at a loss for an answer. He was much perplexed to guess how my mother had learned the secrets of the Council of State, in which the First Consul had spoken at great length, and with an eloquence the more extraordinary as oratory was by no means his forte; he possessed to an almost irresistible extent the art of compelling his auditors to adopt his views; but that he should speak for an hour together and with real eloquence was truly astonishing.

This was not the first time that my mother had surprised us by talking politics, in which formerly she never interfered: but a heart like hers must follow the interests of those she loved. Till my marriage no warmer sentiment than a sincere friendship for a few individuals had caused her to look upon public affairs either with pleasure or uneasiness. But within fifteen months her situation was changed. Her daughter was the wife of a man so intimately attached to the established order of things that the future welfare of that daughter depended on its preservation; her son had a lucrative office in the administration of the republic; and the private opinions of my excellent mother were silenced by these strong ties which bound her to the existing government. She who had never busied herself with any political rumours, now grew desirous of sounding public opinion; she had two or three journals read to her daily, and such of her friends as were in a situation to give her information were laid under contribution. My good and affectionate mother! all these habits so foreign to her former life were not agreeable to her. But it would have distressed her to be ignorant of any thing in which we were interested; and through the elder M. Portalis she frequently learnt news which did not reach Junot till he heard them from her two or three days later; not through any breach of confidence on the part of the counsellor, but merely because Junot did not attend the sittings of the council, and that their proceedings were not reported in the journals. It happened so in the case of the Concordat, one of those landmarks which denote a great epoch in the history of our Revolution.

The publication of the Concordat gave universal satisfaction to France, if we except only a few timid persons, who dreaded, in the

return of religion, that of the clergy, with their pretensions and vengeance. Is it not then surprising, that with the faith of our fathers still cherished in our hearts, we should have suffered our churches to be occupied by such a parody upon our worship?

Cardinal Gonsalvi, Signor Spina (since Cardinal Archbishop of Genoa), and Father Corselli, also a cardinal since that period, came to Paris to terminate the affair of the Concordat. I shall speak hereafter of Cardinal Gonsalvi; I was at this time too young to know and appreciate him. The First Consul himself was much deceived respecting him, and there is every reason to believe that he was prejudiced against him by the minister of foreign affairs.

A person every way worthy of credit, says in his excellent work upon the Consulate, that in a conversation he held with him at Malmaison, the First Consul mentioned that the Cardinal jested as freely as a young musketeer, and had told M. de Talleyrand, *that he was as fond of pleasure as any one, and that he had obtained a reputation for devotion which he did not possess.*

I repeat, the person who reports this conversation with the First Consul is a man of honour, and worthy of credence. What he reports, the First Consul had undoubtedly said to him. I can equally answer for Napoleon. He could dissemble and give a false colouring to a story, but was never guilty of direct falsehood to the extent here imputed to him. The minister must himself have been deceived; for had Cardinal Gonsalvi been as profligate as a Borgia, and as impious as the fifth Sixtus, it is impossible that he could so stupidly proclaim his shame. All who have been honoured with his acquaintance know, that whatever political license he might allow himself in conversation, he never, in the man of the world, or even in the man of gallantry, forgot the dignity of the cardinal. I have held frequent and intimate intercourse with him, and have in my possession more than thirty of his letters; and I can affirm that I never heard him utter an unbecoming word, or received from him a single line that passed the bounds of decorum.

About this time M. Portalis, the elder, presented to the Council of State a brief of Pope Pius VII., authorizing M. de Talleyrand to return to a secular life. Regnault de Saint-Jean-d'Angely asked, "What the council could possibly have to do with the conscience of a man: we are called upon to admit or reject a brief that grants to a person all indulgence and enjoyment of those civil rights of which he himself is in possession. I contend that the council cannot have any thing to do with it." Cambacérès, the president, put the question to the vote, and argued that the First Consul would be much

displeased if the registry of the brief were refused. The permission of the Pope was finally admitted; M. de Talleyrand was restored to the laical community, and can now be buried without wrangle or strife, whenever he shall quit his busy path of life.

It was the First Consul's desire that the promulgation of the Concordat, which had received his definite ratification, should be attended with a religious ceremony, in all the pomp and circumstance of Roman worship. The Concordat, concerning religious affairs, after being signed at Paris on the 15th of July, 1801, by the consuls, was sent to Rome, where it underwent a critical examination in the conclave, and was then signed and ratified in all its integrity by the pontiff; which, considering the Pope's infallibility, methinks ought to suffice to quiet the consciences of those who should be content with being as good Christians as their holy father. Fourteen prelates, more attached to remembrance of the past than to hope of the future, refused to recognise the Concordat. These fourteen bishops were then in London, where at least they lived in *peace* and without *care;* they were right not to change their lot: they would not have been so well treated in France; for the First Consul allowed the bishops only a sufficient revenue for maintaining a creditable establishment.* "They should not have reason to blush," said the First Consul, "in fulfilling the highest ecclesiastical functions; they should also have the means of succouring the unfortunate within their diocese, but archbishops and bishops must not absorb the revenue of a province, excite scandal, and, as in former days, bring religion into disgrace." Forty bishops and nine archbishops were instituted by the First Consul, who imposed the formula of oath to be taken by them on entering upon their diocese.

Easter-day, 1802, was fixed by the First Consul for the installation of the Concordat. The consular court wore at this time rather a curious aspect. It was under the empire only that the court acquired that admirable character of magnificence combined with taste, which might challenge the most splendid periods of the ancient or modern world. Yet considerable progress was already made; and was sufficiently perceptible in the contrast displayed by the procession which now left the Tuileries for Notre-Dame to attend a Te Deum, with the *cortége* which but twenty-six months before had

* According to a statement made by the committee for regulating the allowances made by parliament to be granted to the emigrants in England, there were but 12 bishops, who received each 250*l.* annually from the money voted. This was in 1798.

arrived at the Château from the Luxembourg. The First Consul had issued no orders, but it was intimated to the principal public functionaries that he would be well pleased to see their servants in livery on the day of the ceremony. He put his own household into livery on the occasion: it was certainly showy, but, as yet, by no means well appointed.

From sixty to eighty ladies were invited to accompany Madame Bonaparte to Notre Dame. She had then no ladies of honour: but four companion ladies had voluntarily taken upon them the duties of that office. We assembled at the Tuileries at half-after ten in the morning of Easter-day, in the year 1802. The Consuls occupied but one carriage. Madame Bonaparte was accompanied by her daughter and her sister-in-law: the rest of the procession followed promiscuously. Madame Bonaparte and all the ladies were conducted to the gallery to hear the Te Deum; and the gallery of Notre-Dame, on that day, presented an enchanting spectacle: it formed a magnificent conservatory filled with the choicest flowers. More than two-thirds of the ladies, by whom Madame Bonaparte was surrounded, were not twenty years of age: many were under sixteen. The majority were pretty; I remember but one of the whole group who could be pronounced disagreeable, and that less from irregularity of feature than from a countenance indicative of sullenness, ill-humour, and that unprovoked impertinence which creates foes in all who are its objects. Madame Murat's fair, fresh, and spring-like face, comparable only to a May rose, was surmounted by a pink satin hat and plume of feathers. She wore a gown of fine Indian tambour muslin, lined with pink satin, and trimmed with Brussels point, and over her shoulders was thrown a scarf of the same lace. I have seen her more richly dressed, but never saw her look more beautiful. How many young women, hitherto unknown, on this day took their degree in the realm of beauty, beneath the brilliant beams of a mid-day sun, rendered more glowing in their passage beneath the stained windows of the cathedral. The First Consul himself, the same evening, remarked upon the blaze of beauty which shone in the gallery.

The ceremony was long. Cardinal Caprara, who officiated, was tedious in the extreme; and M. de Boisgelin was equally prolix in his sermon. At near three o'clock we returned to the Tuileries completely tired. The most striking circumstance of the day was its military display. The firing of musketry, the troops lining the streets, the salvoes of artillery, which, from the earliest dawn, had shaken every window of Paris; mingling the sounds of the camp with

religious chants, and with that ecclesiastical pomp so justly in accordance with the solemnity, formed a combination truly imposing.

The First Consul was vehemently irritated by the answer of General Delmas to his question—how he liked the ceremony?

"It was a very showy harlequinade," said the General, "and to render it complete, wanted only the presence of those million of men who have shed their blood for the destruction of that which you have re-erected."

My uncle, Bien-Aymé, was nominated, at this period, to the bishopric of Metz; this reminds me of a conversation he had with the First Consul soon after his admission to the College of Episcopal Prelates. When first canon of the Cathedral of Evreux, he had been for many years the intimate friend of M. de Buffon. The First Consul, whom Junot had informed of this circumstance, wished to converse with the Bishop of Metz of this extraordinary man; and my uncle's astonishment at finding him intimately acquainted with the privacy of M. de Buffon, who lived at a distance from him, and was precluded by all his habits from intercourse with Bonaparte, was particularly diverting.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

Death of my mother—Junot's kindness—Napoleon's condolence in my loss—Delicacy of Lucien Bonaparte—Misunderstanding between the two brothers—Lucien's conduct in Spain—Madame Leclerc—Ridiculous scene with her—Creole costume—Her mad project—Failure of the Expedition to St. Domingo—Death of Leclerc, and return of Pauline—The offering of the widow's hair.

A GREAT misfortune had befallen our family; my mother had ceased to exist. Her sufferings were over, but we had lost our friend, our delight. Her loss was to us irreparable. Before its occurrence, she had occupied all my time and thoughts, and the vacuum produced by the removal of this adored object, continually striking on my heart, occasioned an anguish to which I know of nothing comparable. The affectionate and considerate conduct of Junot on this sad occasion sweetened the bitterness of my grief. As a proof that Junot well understood the heart of her he honoured, was his liberality to three hundred of the most distressed amongst the poor of Paris. They were all relieved, and entirely clothed, in the name of her whose

funeral car they surrounded, and for whom they were mourning and offered prayers of gratitude. How much did this delicacy in giving and administering the consolation of which I should be most sensible, endear my husband to me.

The First Consul was very kind under my affliction. He appeared to bury in oblivion all his former disagreements with my mother. Junot brought me messages of the most friendly consolation from him, and Madame Bonaparte did me the honour of a visit, with Lucien, who had just arrived from Spain. The sight of Lucien deeply affected me. I knew how dear he was to my mother! She loved him almost equally with my brother Albert; she rejoiced in his success and suffered in his disasters. His departure for Spain had much distressed her, and in her greatest agonies she made Junot repeat to her all the honourable traits of his mission to Madrid. Junot felt a degree of partiality for Lucien, as did all those who were attached to the First Consul. I have always been at a loss to account for the schism between the brothers, and I must in justice declare that I never heard from Lucien an unkind word against his brother, although the First Consul frequently made use of expressions which must have been wounding to him even in his absence. But Lucien's conduct in Spain, the treaty of Badajos, that of Madrid, the secret treaty of St. Ildefonso, by which Louisiana, surrendered to Spain by the shameful treaty of 1793, was receded to us; all this made one esteem the man, who, at a distance from France, as well as in the chamber of her representatives, invariably defended the interests of his country, and raised his voice in vindication of her glory and her prosperity.

Meanwhile we had lost Madame Leclerc; she had been strongly urged by her brother to follow her husband to St. Domingo. I believe General Leclerc would willingly have dispensed with this addition to his baggage, for it was a positive calamity after the first quarter of an hour's interview had exhausted the pleasure of surveying her really beautiful person, to have the burden of amusing, occupying, and taking care of Madame Leclerc. In public she professed herself delighted to accompany *her little Leclerc*, as she called him, but she was in reality disconsolate, and I one day found her in a paroxysm of despair and tears, quite distressing to any one who had not known her as well as myself. "Ah! Laurette," said she, throwing herself into my arms, "how fortunate you are! You stay at Paris. Good heavens, how melancholy I shall be! How can my brother be so hard-hearted, so wicked, as to send me into exile amongst savages and serpents. Besides, I am ill. Oh! I shall die before I get there."

Here her speech was interrupted, for she sobbed with such violence, that for a moment I was fearful she would have fainted. I approached her sofa, and taking her hand, endeavoured to encourage her, as one would a child, by talking of its playthings, or new shoes; telling her she would be queen of the island; would ride in a palanquin—that slaves would watch her looks to execute her wishes; that she would walk in groves of orange-trees; that she need have no dread of serpents, as there were none in the Antilles; and that savages were equally harmless. Finally, I summed up my consolatory harangue by telling her she would look very pretty in the Creole costume. As I advanced in my arguments, Madame Leclerc's sobs became less and less hysterical. She still wept, but her tears were not unbecoming. "You really think, Laurette," said she, "that I shall look pretty, prettier than usual, in a Creole turban, a short waist, and a petticoat of striped muslin?"

Description can give but a faint idea of Madame Leclerc at the moment, when her delight at being presented with a new hint for the toilet, chased away the remembrance that she was on the eve of departure for a country where she expected to be devoured. She rang for her waiting-maid. "Bring me all the bandannas in the house." She had some remarkably fine ones which my mother had given her, from a bale of Indian silks and muslins brought over by Vice-admiral Magon. We chose the prettiest amongst them, and as my mother had always worn silk handkerchiefs for nightcaps, I was accustomed from my infancy to the arrangement of the corners in the most becoming manner; Madame Leclerc, therefore, when she examined herself in the glass, was enraptured with my skill."

"Laurette," said she, replacing herself on the sofa, "you know, my dear, how I love you? You preferred Caroline, but we shall see if you won't repent yet.—Listen! I am going to show you the sincerity of my affection. You must come to St. Domingo,—you will be next to myself in rank. I shall be queen, as you told me just now, and you shall be vice-queen. I will go and talk to my brother about it." "I go to St. Domingo, Madam!" I exclaimed. "What in the name of madness are you thinking of?"—"Oh, I know there are difficulties in the way of such an arrangement, but I will talk to Bonaparte about it; and as he is partial to Junot, he will let you go to St. Domingo."

While I looked at her, in perfect amazement, she proceeded, arranging all the while the folds of her gown, and the fashion of her turban. "We will give balls and form parties of pleasure, amongst those beautiful mountains (the serpents and savages were already for-

gotten); Junot shall be the commander of the capital. What is its name? I will tell Leclerc I expect him to give a fête every day. We will take Madame Permon too." As she said this, she pinched my nose and pulled my ears, for she liked to ape her brother, and thought such sort of easy manners had an air of royalty.

But both the ludicrous effect of this scene, and the heaviness I was beginning to feel from it fled at once before the sound of her last words. My mother, who loved her with a tenderness equal to that of Madame Lætitia—my poor mother, who already lay on a bed of suffering, from which she was never more to rise. I felt the possibility that I might make an answer harsh enough to awaken the beautiful dreamer from her reverie; therefore, putting on my gloves, I was about to take leave, when Junot was announced; he had seen my carriage at the door, and stopping his cabriolet, came to my rescue. "You are just arrived in time," cried Madame Leclerc; "sit down there, my dear General, and let us settle every thing; for it is high time," said she, turning to me, "you will have no more than enough for preparing Mademoiselle Despaux, Madame Germon, Le Roi, Copp,* Madame Roux—no, Nattier, will do beter, Mademoiselle l'Olive, Lenormand, Le Vacher, Foncier, Biennais," (and at each name of these celebrated contributors to the toilet, as she counted them on her fingers, she cast a glance of triumph towards us, that seemed to say, "See what an excellent memory I have, and how admirably I can choose my ministers!") "As for myself," she added, "my preparations are made, I am quite ready; but as we set out very shortly, you had better make haste."

Junot's countenance would certainly have diverted any fourth person who might have been a spectator of the scene, his eyes wandered from me to Madame Leclerc, who, perceiving his perplexity, said, "I am going to take you both to St. Domingo, Madame Permon too, and Albert; oh, how happy we shall all be together! Junot was for a moment motionless, till a tremendous burst of laughter interrupted the silence, not very politely it must be confessed, but I afterwards learnt that the explosion was provoked by a wink of peculiar intelligence. Madame Leclerc was astonished at such a mode of testifying his gratitude, expecting to see him throw himself at her feet; but she reckoned without her host. "Very pretty," said she,

* Copp was a famous shoemaker, the same, who after a most attentive examination of a shoe, which one of his customers showed him, complaining that it split before she had worn it an hour, detected at length the cause of such a misfortune befalling a specimen of his workmanship:

"Ah," said he, "I see how it is, Madame, you have been walking."

pouting; "will you please to explain the meaning of this gaiety? Methinks it is not exactly the way to thank an old friend who intends you a kindness." "Have you had the goodness to mention your intentions to the First Consul, Madame?" said Junot, who, though growing more decorous, could not yet entirely overcome his risible propensities. "No, certainly not, for your wife has but just suggested the idea."

Junot turned to me with an astonishment that nearly set me laughing, in my turn. "What! my wife go to St. Domingo?" said he. "And why not?—she will be the first person there next to myself—she is used to the world; she dresses well; she is elegant. I will give her some slaves, and Leclerc will make you commandant of that town—the . . . the . . . ."—"The Cape," said Junot. "Exactly, the Cape. . . . the Cape"—and she repeated like a parrot the word which in five minutes she would altogether have forgotten. "I am infinitely obliged to you, Madam," said Junot, with comic seriousness, "but really, with your permission, I should prefer remaining commandant of Paris. Besides, there is a slight obstacle which you do not appear to have taken into contemplation."

And throwing his arms round me, he drew me towards him, embraced me, and hinted at my being in the family way. Madame Leclerc opened her eyes even wider than was usual with her when surprised, and that was not unfrequently—a little mannerism that was not unbecoming; looked first in my face, and then at the obstacle before me, and said, "I did not think of that." "But what of that," said she, the next moment; "what does it signify whether your infant utters his first cry on the waves, or on terra firma? I will give Laurette a vessel to herself. Ah, what say you to that, M. Junot? Am not I a capital manager? I will write immediately to Brest, where we are to embark, and order a vessel to be expressly prepared. Villaret Joyeuse is a good-natured man; he will do anything that I desire. Come, let me embrace you both."

"As for embracing you, Madam," said Junot, laughing himself almost out of breath, "I am assuredly too happy in the permission not to take advantage of it; but for our voyage we will, if you please, drop that project which Laura's friendship for you, no doubt, inspired. Besides," added he, "I do not think the First Consul would consent to it. You know he likes to nominate his generals spontaneously, and without reference to private feelings such as would influence this affair;" and he laughed anew. "But," he continued, "I am not the less grateful for your intentions, Madam, and be assured I am fully sensible of them; only"——and again the unfortunate laugh

redoubled; "another time be kind enough to prove them otherwise than by putting my little Laura to bed on the wide ocean, and giving me the command of the Cape instead of Paris, and all this for old friendship's sake."

Junot, kneeling on a footstool beside Madame Leclerc's settee, was kissing her hands all the while that he said this, in a tone which, though certainly of derision, and perhaps of a little innocent impertinence, could not be offensive. Madame Leclerc was not competent to understand the raillery of his expressions, but by a sort of instinctive cunning she perceived that he was making game of her; and, whether really distressed at so peremptory a negative to her project, or not less so at being laughed at in my presence by Junot, of whose former attachment for her she had a thousand times boasted to me, the fact is, she repulsed him with such violence as to throw him from the footstool on the carpet, and said, in a voice choked with sobs, "This it is to attach oneself to the ungrateful!—I, who love Laura like a sister!" (and in truth that was not saying much). "And you, too, Junot, who refuse to accompany and defend me in a country where I am to be deserted. . . . . ." And her tears rolled in floods.

"I will never refuse to assist a woman in peril," said Junot, rising, and with an expression half in jest and half earnest, "but permit me to say that is not your situation." "Ah!" continued she, still weeping, and without listening to him, "you would not have made all those reflections when we were at Marseilles! . . . . you would not so tranquilly have seen me set out, to be devoured, perhaps . . . . How can I tell? In short, to face all the dangers of a land filled with savages and wild beasts!—I, who have said so much to Laurette of your attachment to me!" This time it was impossible to restrain my laughter. Such an appeal to a husband, in the very presence of his wife, threw me into such a paroxysm of mirth, that Junot, though beginning to be weary of the scene, could not forbear joining. "Come, be reasonable," said he to the beautiful Niobe, with the freedom of an old friend; "do not weep, it destroys the lustre of the eyes, the bloom of the cheek, and renders the prettiest woman almost ugly—beautiful as you are!" After our departure we indulged for several minutes in a most immoderate fit of laughter.

"Is it possible," said Junot at length, "that you can have said any thing tending to inspire her with the barbarous notion of your inclination to visit the country of the blacks?"—I told him the whole story, and he in return explained to me why he had been so excessively amused, by the capricious beauty's sudden proposal to carry me off eighteen hundred leagues from Paris, made with as much ease as one

invites a friend to a week's visit at a country seat.—"She still loves you then?" said I.—"She!—in the first place, she never loved me; and in the next, supposing her to have returned, in the slightest measure, a love as passionate as beauty can engender in an ardent mind and volcanic head, at the age of twenty-four, she has long ago lost all remembrance of it. No! you visited Madame Leclerc at a moment when she was under the dominion of one of those nervous affections to which women, and especially such women, are frequently subject. The sight of you instinctively redoubled her emotion, simply because it recalled happy days; then you talked to her of dressing *à la* Virginia, and she immediately recollected that at Marseilles, when I was madly in love, when the excellent Madame Bonaparte, the mother, was willing to accept me as a son-in-law, and the First Consul, ever prudent and wary, observed, 'You have neither of you the means of living,' I, in my delirium, answered, 'But, my General, think of Paul and Virginia—their friends preferred fortune to happiness: and what was the consequence?'—The First Consul, who was never romantic, did but shrug his shoulders and repeat his usual phrase, 'You have neither of you the means of living.'"

"But," said I, "it could not be the bandanna and the fashion in which I turned up its red and green corners, that produced this jargon of unconnected folly."—"You need seek no deeper for it. Madame Leclerc's imagination is perfectly stagnant on many points; and compensates itself by an incredibly creative faculty in others. Her ignorance is unbounded, and equalled only by her vanity. Well, these two properties, which make up her whole composition, easily open themselves a way which the most sprightly imagination, united with a few grains more of sense, would find it difficult to trace. I know her well; her vanity made her veritably believe that I should be but too happy to join this expedition to St. Domingo."—"And you think she would really have spoken to the First Consul, if you had not arrived?"—"Beyond all doubt; for she is perfectly sincere. She was convinced that all she was arranging, or rather deranging in her pretty little head, was entirely for our interests, and would have requested her brother's permission for my joining her husband's army as a special favour towards me."

I do not know whether it was a suggestion of the female imagination, ever restless, or perhaps more properly jealous, that made me observe on the possibility that Madame Leclerc, tenacious of her project of roaming with me amongst the blacks in a gown of striped muslin, and a bandanna jacket and turban, might yet mention it to her brother."—"Faith! you are very right," said Junot.—"Beautiful

creature as she is (and good and excellent moreover, for her heart is free from malevolence), this affair might prove a rehearsal of the story of the bear knocking his friends on the head. We must forestal such favours."

The event proved my sagacity. The same day Junot related to the First Consul all that had passed between his sister and me, taking care, as may be supposed, not to throw in too strong a colouring. As for the picture itself, with all its subordinate attributes, the First Consul knew his sister too well to suppose the relative situation of the parties exaggerated. Three days afterwards he said to Junot with a smile, "You are bent then on going to St. Domingo?" Junot replied only by a bow and a corresponding smile. "I am sorry, but you cannot go at present. I want you here, as I have given General Leclerc to understand, who wanted to persuade me that you would be more useful to me at the Cape than in Paris." Junot assured me that it was amusing to observe the countenance of the First Consul as he spoke this; it exhibited a rapid succession of novel impressions recalling images of the past.

Yet the whole affair passed over Madame Leclerc's mind without penetrating beyond its surface; for she possessed no solidity, and all her conceptions were as uncertain and fugitive, as her head was incapable of methodizing any plan. The next time I saw her she had forgotten every thing but the bandanna. She had been that very morning to my poor mother's to have her turban arranged by her hands; and my mother, though in extreme pain, had taken a sort of pride in setting it off to the best advantage round a head which in this dress was one of the prettiest imaginable.

The squadron at length set sail, in the month of December, 1801. The dresses, hats, caps, and other frivolities which Madame Leclerc took out with her, were innumerable. Thirty-five ships of the line, twenty-two frigates, and an immense number of gun-boats followed the vessel which bore the lovely Cleopatra, and which had been furnished with every appurtenance of luxury, elegance, and utility, that the fair voyager might have no desire ungratified. The General was disposed to have refused admission to so many useless indispensables, but Madame Leclerc, at the first sound of objection, assumed a tone that instantly reduced her spouse to silence for the sake of peace, during the exile to which he was condemned. This was a singular match; I could never comprehend its inducements—for the reason ascribed by report was absurd. Madame Leclerc treated her husband pretty despotically, and yet was afraid of him, not indeed

properly of him, but of the First Consul. She required from him observances that would be very amusing in the relation.

The expedition to St. Domingo encountered in its day plenty of approbation, and plenty of censure. The censures alleged that it was folly to oppose the entire population of a distant colony, whose savage disposition refused all quarter to their adversaries, thus exposing our troops to the double perils of a murderous warfare, and no less murderous climate. They were grieved to see so fine an army despatched to America before the remnant of that which the deserts of Africa had nearly engulphed, was restored to us. They contended that, in spite of his profound ambition, in spite even of his cruelty, it was necessary to guarantee to Toussaint-Louverture, the government for life which had been conferred upon him by the colonists. He had very distinguished military talents, a political address, or rather an ingenious cunning, which had saved St. Domingo from the English yoke, and above all from its own passions. They were, therefore, of opinion, that the First Consul should leave Toussaint-Louverture at liberty still to call himself, if he so pleased, *the first of the blacks*,* and that he should be acknowledged Governor of St. Domingo, subject to the dominion of France,—terms to which he would most willingly have agreed. But the First Consul justly observed, that Toussaint was a hypocrite, who, while protesting his devotion to the consular government, was meditating the liberation of the French Antilles from the authority of the republic. "I am the Bonaparte of St. Domingo," said he, "the colony cannot exist without me; I must be preserved to her."

Such language, on the part of such a man, must have excited alarm for the future fate of the island and its dependencies, especially considering the character of his two lieutenants, Christophe and Dessalines. A cousin of mine, in the marines, who, having arrived at St. Domingo, served as a volunteer in the army, and was prisoner to Dessalines, has told me anecdotes of this *monster*,—for he does not deserve the name of man,—which surpass in sanguinary horror all the most tragical conceptions of the most gloomy and terrific imagination. Bonaparte knew the character of these men of blood; but he was desirous of restoring peace and abundance to that fine colony, and it could only be accomplished by maintaining the blacks. In the

* When acknowledged by the consular government Commandant of St. Domingo, he had written a letter to the First Consul, with this subscription: "Toussaint, the first of the blacks, to Bonaparte, the first of the whites."

short interval between the submission and the second insurrection of the island (that is to say of the blacks) for which the re-establishment of slavery at Guadaloupe was the pretext, St. Domingo recovered its prosperity; the lands were cultivated, and commerce revived. But Toussaint, who, on the submission of the colony, had ostensibly retired to live peaceably on one of his estates, soon began to contrive and organize another massacre of the whites.

England was no stranger to these new projects of Toussaint; she excited them, and more than once, English gold paid the price of our blood. Toussaint-Louverture was carried off in the middle of the night, transported on board a vessel and brought to France; he was consigned to the castle of Joux, and from thence removed to the citadel of Besançon, where he died suddenly; which gave rise to an absurd rumour; for if the death of Toussaint was violent, as some voices have proclaimed, there should have been some actuating motive for the deed; but where can such motives be found?

Although General Rochambeau has been much censured, because none could venture openly to blame the First Consul's brother-in-law, it cannot be denied, that one principal cause of the loss of St. Domingo, and the destruction of that immense expedition which had sailed from Brest, l'Orient, and Toulon, was the unskilful and imprudent administration of General Leclerc.

Before we hastily decide on Rochambeau's errors, we should take all the circumstances into account; and, judging candidly of his situation, consider what he could have done without resorting to arbitrary measures, but which the unhappy state of affairs drove him to the hard necessity of employing. Pressed on one side by the blacks, who thus irritated by the faults of his predecessor, had raised the standard of revolt with more frantic fury and sanguinary rage than ever, he was hemmed in on the other by an English fleet, to whom he surrendered with the six thousand men that remained to him. Death seemed to have brandished his sickle with ambitious eagerness through the ranks of that army, but two years ago in so flourishing a condition; sickness, assassination, battle, had afforded him an ample harvest, the means of destruction multiplied around this devoted army, and only a very small remnant ever set foot again on their native soil.

Madame Leclerc returned to Europe bearing the corpse of her husband, which she had enclosed in a coffin of cedar, and then cutting off her beautiful hair affected the Artemesia. Her parade, however, of immoderate grief and ostentatious despair, made but little impres-

sion; the First Consul himself, when told that his sister had sacrificed her hair to the manes of her husband without preserving a single lock, answered with a significant smile: "Oh, she knows full well it will only grow the more luxuriantly for its cropping."

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Peace with England—Remarkable speech of Bonaparte to the Belgian deputies—Glory of France under the Consulate—State of the principal continental Powers at this period—Concourse of foreigners at Paris—English and Russian visitors—Mr. Fox—Characteristic anecdote of—Lord and Lady Cholmondley—The Duchess of Gordon and her daughter—Lady Georgiana—Public magnificence and private economy of Napoleon—Bonaparte's fine coat—Story told by the First Consul to Josephine—The power of masses—Characteristic of Napoleon's policy.

Peace with England was definitely signed. The treaty of Amiens had confirmed the preliminaries of reconciliation with our great rival on the 25th of March, 1802. On this occasion, which terminated all the differences of Europe, Joseph Bonaparte was again our messenger of peace. The temple of Janus was at length closed, and France exalted to a higher pinnacle of glory and real power than she has ever since attained, for she had emerged from a struggle with United Europe, victorious, aggrandized, and respected. The colonies captured by England were restored to us. The course of the Scheldt was left in our hands, as well as the Austrian Netherlands, part of Brabant, Dutch Flanders, and a number of cities, as Maestricht, Venloo, &c.

A noble speech of the First Consul to the Belgian deputies is connected with this point of our history. On the opening of the conferences of Luneville they waited on the chief of the republic, to offer him their thanks for having supported the rights of a people who would accept no other protection than that of France. "It was in justice to ourselves," replied the First Consul to the deputation;* "the treaty of Campo Formio had already recognised the position of Belgium. During the years which have elapsed since that treaty, our arms have suffered reverses, and it was supposed that the Republic, less favoured by fortune, would weakly yield; but this was a serious mistake. Belgium, like all other territories acquired by treaties

* See the Moniteur of the month of October, 1800.

solemnly guaranteed, forms as integral a part of France as the most ancient of her provinces, as Brittany or Burgundy; and were the FAUBOURG ST. ANTOINE IN THE OCCUPATION OF AN ENEMY, FRANCE COULD NEVER ABANDON HER RIGHTS." Such were the words of Napoleon, addressed to the Belgian deputies.

Yes, France was then resplendent in glory! Independently of the northern possessions, forming that national boundary for which it is the duty of every Frenchman to contend with his life, she was mistress of the German territory on the left of the Rhine, as well as of Avignon and the Venaissin, Geneva, and almost the whole bishopric of Basle, Savoy, and Nice. The Republic founded and protected states; she erected the Grand Duchy of Tuscany into a kingdom; Austrian Lombardy was transformed under her auspices into an Italian Republic; Genoa rose into a sovereignty under the name of the Ligurian Republic, and all these states sheltered themselves beneath the spacious folds of the tri-coloured banner, relying on the vigour and vigilance of the Gallic cock. The Republic extended her protection to aquatic Batavia. By her recent treaties with Spain and Portugal, she had reconquered colonies capable of reviving her preponderance in another hemisphere. By the secret treaty of St. Ildefonso, and the care of Lucien Bonaparte, her flag waved once more over Louisiana, that fine and fertile province, surrendered to Spain by the disgraceful and humiliating peace of 1793, but the possession of which now placed us in an imposing attitude in the Gulf of Mexico, and would prove a formidable point of attack against the American Union, in case of a rupture. She had wrested from the Portuguese sceptre territories which, with their broad deserts, formed an impenetrable barrier for French Guiana. In short, the Republic, at this period of the consular government, was greater even than the empire ever was. Napoleon's orb of glory was then, indeed, immensurable.

These are not prejudiced opinions, overlooking ulterior events in the impressions of the past; they have reference solely to that year 1802, when England deserted her shores to come and admire the man whom indeed she might not love, but whose heroic qualities and splendid genius that eminently judicious people knew how to appreciate.

At the brilliant period of the peace between England and France, the name of the First Consul was enshrined in dazzling glory. Austria had lost her federative sway, together with her preponderating power, not only in the north of Europe, but in Italy. England, after sacrificing so many millions, both of gold and men, in support of her quarrel with France, derived no other advantage from so sanguinary a struggle than the possession of the Island of Trinidad, and the Dutch settle-

ments in Ceylon; to which may, indeed, be added, the devastation of the Mysore; the death of Tippoo Saib, to whom our alliance proved fatal; and the overthrow of that Nizam which a Frenchman had exposed himself to the burning sun of India to erect. These are all the fruits our haughty rival could boast of having gathered from the fields that had witnessed her military contests with us. Though it cannot be denied that she had nearly annihilated our marine.

Prussia had endeavoured, in this as in every former instance since the death of her hero, to appropriate to herself some share of the booty in the general scramble; but her ill-acquired additions, ill-adjusted to a territory originally defective in concentration, furnished at last but a disjointed sovereignty. Her frontiers were exposed; the pivots upon which the great Frederick had rested his truly great monarchical machine, either from being worn out, or because he had carried to the tomb with him the secret of their action, had lost their play, and no longer revolved upon their axles. That prime mover so much insisted on by the great King, the treasure regarded by him as the sole source of success in war, was dissipated, and its coffers empty. The influence of Frederick's memory still conferred on Prussia a preponderance in Germany, which, if it did not balance ours, was yet considerable; it was, however, but an illusory domination, dissipated like the fog of an autumn morning before the fire of the first cannon at Austerlitz. Caroline, Queen of Naples, entertained a hatred for France exceeding the ordinary limits of human passion; yet her court, though scarcely deserving of consideration, had at length entered into alliance with the First Consul and the Republic. Sweden had long done the same. It is true she liked us no better; but what did that signify to us? We had achieved an universal peace, and a peace glorious for France. When I retrace those days, those hours of dazzling glory, abounding in laurels, to whose growth and verdure he whose name I bear had contributed, my heart beats with that pride which once made us elevate our heads when we said, "I am a Frenchwoman."

Paris now realized the vision of the First Consul for his great city;—it had become the capital of the civilized world. Such was the concourse of foreigners, that exorbitant prices were charged for the most inferior lodgings, and paid without hesitation. My situation as wife of the Commandant of Paris, introduced me to all strangers of any celebrity, and I confess my most interesting recollections belong to this portion of my life. Russians and English were the principal actors on this scene. The English, greedy of travelling, and so long shut out from their European tour—for Italy, Switzerland,

and part of Germany had, since 1795, been as inaccessible to them as France—gave loose to their joy with all the frankness and sincerity of their national character, which is so totally in opposition with the sophistry and artifice of their cabinet. They flocked in crowds to Paris, and entered with ardour into the pleasures which France offered them in abundance, which they felt too happy in repaying with their gold: society, too, the best society, then beginning to reorganize itself, presented attractions which their acute and judicious perceptions were equally capable of appreciating.

Among the English arrivals of that day were some names whose undying reputation fills the memory, nearly to the exclusion of all others. Mr. Fox, for example, was one of those beings whom it is impossible to see, though but once, without remembering for ever, as a happy epoch in one's life, the day of introduction. His fine talents and noble character were the adoration of a majority of our countrymen. I shared with others in admiring the high feeling of Mr. Fox, when seconded by Grey, and I believe by Sheridan, he summoned Mr. Pitt, the minister of the day, to adopt a course not menacing but conciliatory; in short to make an attempt, by entreaties addressed to the Convention, to save the life of Louis XVI. "*In the name of English honour*," said this great man, "however vain your efforts, however useless your endeavours, try them at least, and show the world that Kings do not stand by unmoved to see a brother sovereign murdered. Why do you talk of armaments?" he added with warmth, in reply to Mr. Pitt. "*By what right would you immolate a thousand heads to revenge the fall of one*, when a few decisive words might prevent the sacrifice?" What a contrast do these admirable arguments offer to the proceedings of the inflexible minister, who by arming England, exciting Spain, and making a clamorous display of hostility, did but too probably accelerate the fate of the unfortunate Louis.

Mr. Fox's aspect did not at the first glance seem to justify his prodigious fame; his demeanour was even ordinary, and the first time that I saw him dressed in a dark-gray coat, and with his head somewhat inclined, he gave me the idea of a good Devonshire farmer —a man incapable of any pretension. But how rapidly were these motives put to flight when the course of conversation brought the energies of his mind into view. His countenance became animated with the first sentence of interest that passed his lips, and gradually brightened with increasing intelligence, till it was absolutely fiery and sparkling. His voice, subdued at first, rose in modulation till it burst upon the ear like thunder; and the same man, who, but a few minutes

before, had appeared the most commonplace of mortals, was now an object of intense admiration.

I first saw him at a distance; he was next introduced to me at the Tuileries, where in the midst of a multitudinous and noisy throng, it was impossible to put in operation any of the plans I had concerted for drawing forth the sentiments of one of the most distinguished and most justly celebrated men of the eighteenth century. At length he dined at my house, and the conversation having first been of a general kind, turned afterwards on such topics as were more especially adapted to the illustrious stranger. The entire concurrence of opinion between Mr. Fox, Junot, and some of his other guests, precluded debate; but the affairs of England and the ministry which had replaced Mr. Pitt were long under discussion, and the conversation, though tranquil, was of a remarkable character; when one of the company who had been of the Egyptian expedition, and had returned with his mind violently exasperated, brought forward the intractable subject of the events in that quarter, freely indulging his rancour against England, Mr. Fox's countenance changed with a rapidity it is impossible to describe; we no longer beheld the leader of the English opposition, but the advocate of Mr. Pitt, defending him with his eloquence amidst a circle of enemies. The conversation grew warm, and Junot soon took an unfortunate part in it. He had been made prisoner on his return from Egypt by a Captain Styles, conducted to Jaffa, and introduced to Sir Sydney Smith, who was negotiating there with the Grand Vizier the treaty of El-Arich, for the evacuation of Egypt; from thence he accompanied Sir Sydney on board the *Tiger* to Larneka in Cyprus; here Junot, as I have before observed, contracted for Smith one of those chivalrous friendships which he was very capable of feeling, and the brave English commodore well calculated to inspire. He had more than once laid lance in rest as the champion of his friendly foe; and now, believing him compromised in something that was said respecting the infamous infraction of the treaty which he had guaranteed, and satisfied in his own mind that his gallant friend was the most honourable of men. "It was not his doing!" cried Junot, animated by a sentiment of truth and justice, "he would never have said, with Mr. Pitt, 'The destruction of that perfidious army is a matter of rejoicing; the interests of human nature require its total annihilation.' No! Sir Sydney Smith would be incapable of uttering such a libel on his profession and on human nature." Mr. Fox turned crimson, then pale as death, passed his hand over his eyes, and made no immediate answer; at the end of a minute that striking voice, which, with its

sonorous tone, could overpower all others, murmured rather than articulated, "I beg your pardon; Mr. Pitt never used such words. No," answered the statesman, to whose upright and patriotic soul the imputation was truly painful, "those terrible words never fell from the lips of Mr. Pitt,—they are Mr. Dundas's."*

Paris was also at this time the rendezvous of a multitude of English, who, though less celebrated than Mr. Fox or his brother, proved very agreeable acquaintances. Those whom I chiefly preferred, were Lord and Lady Cholmondeley, Mrs. Harrison, a young widow from India, of most simple, unaffected and fascinating manners, the Duchess of Gordon and her daughter Lady Georgiana, Colonel James Green, and Lady E. Foster, afterwards Duchess of Devonshire. Lady Cholmondeley had considerably the advantage of me in years; but her manners and those of her lord were courteously polished; she talked to me of the glory of the First Consul and his companions in arms, in a tone of perfect sincerity and good-will, she blended so amiably with unqualified respect for the dignity of her

* The following anecdote illustrative of Fox's character was communicated to me by an Englishman: At a time when he was much embarrassed in his pecuniary circumstances, a note of hand of his for three hundred guineas was presented for payment. There were no funds to meet this, and the unlucky creditor made repeated but useless application to get the bill cashed. By a stratagem, he succeeded at last in seeing Mr. Fox, who was actually employed at the time in counting out several hundred guineas. The creditor's hopes of a satisfactory settlement of his claim were now very sanguine, especially as Mr. Fox showed no signs of embarrassment at being discovered in the employment he was engaged in. His dismay may therefore easily be imagined, when he was calmly told that, in spite of the display of wealth before him, Mr. Fox had not ten guineas at his own disposal. In fact, that the whole of the money on the table—about eight hundred guineas—was destined to discharge a *debt of honour*: a gaming transaction of the previous evening. When the creditor remonstrated upon the injustice of passing by his own legitimate debt in favour of one so much less pressing, Fox appeared astonished, and endeavoured to show that the *debt of honour* had a much higher claim upon his immediate attention, in so far as there existed no other security for its liquidation than his verbal assurance; whereas, the holder of the bill possessed his signature, which would be ultimately honoured. "If this be a just mode of discrimination," drily remarked the creditor, "I will instantly convert my claim into a debt of honour," at the same time tearing the bill into pieces; "and you will allow that as my demand now stands upon an equal footing with your last night's loss, as being simply a debt of honour, I have the advantage of priority at all events." He well judged his man. Fox was too generous and right-minded to hesitate; he accordingly took the necessary sum from the heap before him, and satisfied the creditor whose debt, in justice, required immediate payment; and cheerfully resigned himself to fortune, in the hope of discharging the mere debt of honour.

own nation, a just appreciation of the qualities of those I loved, that I was almost attached to her. The First Consul, who received every morning circumstantial intelligence respecting the English in Paris, had a high esteem for the Earl and Countess Cholmondeley. The Duchess of Gordon is assuredly not forgotten by those who had the supreme happiness of seeing her in Paris in 1802. When I wish to recreate my thoughts, I call to mind her burlesque appearance and manners, which, as is well known, were, notwithstanding her duchess-mania, very far from ducal.

The general aspect of society in Paris, at that time, deserves a place in contemporary memoirs. The First Consul required all the principal authorities to maintain, not only a creditable, but a splendid establishment. Nothing could exceed (and this fact will be attested by all living persons who knew Napoleon as I did) his extreme and rigid economy in all his private concerns; but when circumstances required it, he could equal in magnificence the most sumptuous sovereign of the east; the liberality of Aboul-Cazem then presided over every arrangement. I remember his once admonishing Duroc for neglecting to transmit an order, regulating the private breakfasts at the Palace, which he had given him the evening before; the order therefore had been delayed but a few hours, "but an additional day's expense," said the First Consul, "is too much."

A few minutes afterwards one of the ministers arrived. The First Consul immediately entered into consultation upon a fête that was to be given the following week, on the 14th July; the anniversary of the destruction of the Bastille, which was observed till the re-establishment of royalty; the Tuileries were illuminated, and, as far as I can remember, the theatres were opened gratis. "Josephine," said he, with the tone of kindness he generally adopted towards her, for he was tenderly attached to her, "I am going to impose upon you a command—you will have much pleasure in obeying. I desire you will be dazzling—make your preparations accordingly; for my part I shall wear my fine suit of crimson silk embroidered with gold, presented to me by the city of Lyons,—I shall then be superb." This dress was, as he said, presented to him by the city of Lyons, on occasion of the *Helvetic Consulta*, in the month of January preceding; and to say the truth he had already worn it and made a most singular appearance in it, which instantly occurred to my recollection, when he talked of his *fine suit*, and I could not suppress a laugh; he perceived it, for nothing escaped his observation; and coming up to me said, as he surveyed me with a half-angry and half-smiling air—"What do you mean by that sar-

castic smile, Madame Junot? you think, I suppose, that I shall not be as smart as all those handsome Englishmen and Russians, who look so sweet upon you and turn all your young heads. I am sure I am at least as agreeable as that English colonel—that dandy, who is said to be the handsomest man in England, and whom I can compare to nothing but the Prince of Coxcombs."

This expression—a dandy,* was a favourite word with Napoleon for designating men who displeased him. In the present instance he alluded to a tall Englishman, called Colonel or Captain Matthews, and who passed for a devourer of hearts—English ones be it observed. I could not avoid laughing still more heartily at this idea of the First Consul and his pretensions to elegance and fashion; whereas he had at that time an utter antipathy to every thing that is called fashionable, and showed it in the most unqualified dislike of such young men as had the misfortune to pass in the world for agreeable and elegant. Soft speeches, graceful attitudes, and all other qualifications of a beau, he treated with even more bitterness and contempt than he generally bestowed on the persons he most disliked. Madame Bonaparte presently afterwards made an observation in praise of M. de Flahaut, who, she said, possessed a variety of talents. "What are they? Sense? Bah! who has not as much as he?—He sings well! A noble talent for a soldier who must be always hoarse by profession. Ah! he is a beau—that is what pleases you women. I see nothing so extraordinary in him; he is just like a spider, with his eternal legs; his shape is quite unnatural: to be well shaped——." Here his speech was broken in upon, for, being at that time much given to laughing, I could not restrain a second fit, on seeing the First Consul look with complacency at his own small legs (which like his whole person were then very shapely), covered with silk stockings, and a shoe sharp-pointed enough to have pierced the eye of a needle. He did not finish his sentence, but I am certain he meant—"to be well shaped his leg should be like that."

And yet no being could have less vanity than Napoleon; he was neatness itself, and extremely particular in his dress, but made not the slightest claim to elegance. For this reason, the movement which approached his hand to his leg, as he mentioned the spider legs of M. de Flahaut,† set me laughing, by its *naïveté*. He both saw and heard the laugh; and what is more he understood it; and coming towards me again said, "Well, you little pest! What do you find to laugh at?

* *Godelureau.*

† This gentleman was subsequently one of the aides-de-camp of the Emperor.

So you must make game, in your turn, of my legs. They do not figure as well to your fancy in a country dance as those of your elegant friends. But a man may both sing and dance without being a dandy. Let me ask yourself, Madame Junot, tell me if Talleyrand's nephew is not a pleasing young man?" My answer was ready; the person he alluded to was Louis de Perigord, who, as well as his brother and his sister, now Madame Justus de Noailles, had a large fortune; he was then nineteen years of age, and already united to the acuteness of his uncle, a sound judgment, sprightly wit, polished manners, and the vivid resemblance of his father's person; the last is an eulogium of itself.

Napoleon then addressing Josephine said, "I desire you will be dazzling in jewellery and richly dressed; do you hear?" "Yes," replied Madame Bonaparte, "and then you find fault, perhaps fall into a passion; or, you erase my warrants of payment from the margin of my bills."* And she pouted like a little girl, but with the most perfect good-humour. Madame Bonaparte's manners possessed, when she chose it, a seducing charm. Her graciousness might be too general, but, undeniably, she could be, when she chose, perfectly attractive and loveable. When the First Consul announced his will regarding her toilet, she looked at him so prettily, walked towards him with such graceful sweetness, her whole manner breathing so evident a desire to please, that he must have had a heart of stone who could resist her. Napoleon loved her; drew her closer to him, and embraced her. "Certainly, my dear love, I sometimes cancel your warrants of payment, because you are occasionally so imposed upon, that I cannot take it upon my conscience to sanction such abuses; but it is not, therefore, inconsistent to recommend you to be magnificent on occasions of parade. One interest must be weighed against another, and I hold the balance equitably, though strictly. Here, I will tell you a story, which will do wonders as a lesson, if you will but remember it. Listen too," beckoning us to draw near, "listen too, you young giddy-pates, and profit by it.

"There lived at Marseilles, a rich merchant, who received one morning, through the hands of a young man, of good family and fortune, a letter strongly recommending the bearer to his notice; the

* This circumstance happened many times. I have myself seen two bills erased with the Emperor's own hand; one was for linen, the other for essences and perfumery.

"You have your own linendraper, Mademoiselle l'Olive," said the Emperor, "why try an unknown warehouse? You must pay these new fancies out of your allowance."

merchant, after having read the letter, instead of either throwing it aside as waste paper, when he found that it covered one only of the four sides of the sheet, tore it in two, placed the written half in a leaf of his portfolio, and the other half that would serve for writing a note upon, into another portfolio, which already contained a number of similar papers. Having attended to this act of economy, he turned towards the young man, and invited him to dinner for that very day. The youth, accustomed to a life of luxury, felt but little inclination to dine with a man apparently so mean. He accepted the invitation, however, and promised to return at four o'clock. But as he descended the narrow counting-house staircase, his mind rapidly reverted to the observations he had made upon that small gloomy room, with the two long offices which led to it, encumbered with dusty ledgers, and where a dozen young men were working in melancholy silence; he then repented of his folly in accepting the invitation. The duties of the toilet were discharged more for his own satisfaction than in compliment to the host who expected him; and that done he proceeded to the banker's house. On arriving there he desired to be conducted to the merchant's lady. A number of valets in rich liveries led him across a small garden, filled with rare plants, and after conducting him through several apartments sumptuously furnished, introduced him to a handsome drawing-room, where he found the banker, who presented him to his wife, who was young and pretty, and elegantly attired; he himself was no longer the unattractive-looking personage his guest had seen in the morning, while the manners and conversation of fifteen or twenty visitors, who were assembled in the drawing-room, led to the inference that this house was one of the most refined in the city. The viands were excellent, the wines exquisite, the table covered with an abundance of massy silver plate; in short, the young traveller was obliged mentally to admit, that he had never partaken of more delicate fare, or seen a greater display of magnificence; and he was more than ever confounded upon ascertaining from one of the persons near him, that the banker gave a similar entertainment twice a week. While coffee was serving, he ruminated on all that he had witnessed. The banker observing his fit of abstraction, soon succeeded by drawing him into conversation, in finding out the cause of his perplexity, and observed emphatically, 'You are too young to understand how masses are formed, the true and only power; whether composed of money, water, or men, it is all alike. A mass is an immense centre of motion, but it must be begun—it must be kept up. Young man, the

little bits of paper which excited your derision this morning, are one among the many means I employ for attaining it.'"

I was much struck afterwards by this idea of masses as the foundation of power, so characteristic of Napoleon's policy.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

The First Consul the admiration of foreigners at Paris—Eagerness of foreigners to see Bonaparte—Bonaparte's dislike of them—The Princess with five or six husbands—The Duchess de Sagan, and the Duchess de Dino—The Prince de Rohan, and the pensioned husband—The Princess Dolgoroucky—Prince Galitzin—Lord and Lady Conyngham—Lord Whitworth, and the Duchess of Dorset—Lord Yarmouth—Prince Philip von Cobentzel—Madame Demidoff—Napoleon desires me to show the objects of art to the distinguished foreigners at Paris.

The First Consul said one day to Junot, "You and your wife see a great many foreigners, do you not?" Junot replied in the affirmative; and in truth, English and Russians, the latter especially, constituted the chief part of our society. Junot had just bought a country-house at Bièvre, where we frequently had large parties; and the First Consul had given us for the baptismal gift of my Josephine, the house in the Champs-Elysées, which enabled us to receive our guests with convenience, and creditably to fulfil the duties of the post Junot occupied, as well as those to which he was bound, as the oldest friend and servant of that astonishing man on whom the eyes of the whole world were at this time fixed. To such an extent was this admiration of Napoleon carried, that it sometimes happened that Englishmen came to France only for a few hours, went to the parade, saw the First Consul, and returned to England. Junot enjoyed this triumph. I have sometimes seen a dinner interrupted for half an hour, while the company listened with avidity to his account of his beloved General's glorious early years. The ladies were not outdone in curiosity respecting the previous life of Napoleon; they asked even more questions than the men. We had for neighbours in our new habitation a Russian family, whose enthusiasm for the First Consul surpassed that of his most ardent admirers. This was the family Diwoff; the Countess Diwoff, in particular, had such an exclusive passion for him, for his glory, for his most trifling actions, that Junot and I did not hesitate to admit her to the intimacy she demanded, and

which the proximity of our respective residences increased; so that I always found pleasure in spending an evening with my *little sister*, as she insisted on my calling her, though thirty years older than myself; and the more so, as her many parties included all the foreigners of distinction in Paris.

One of Napoleon's peculiarities, perhaps but little known, was his extreme aversion, during the Consulate and the first years of the Empire, for the society of foreigners, and of the Faubourg St. Germain; amongst the travellers with whom France was then inundated, were a few whose names he held in consideration, and a very limited exception was made in their favour. He had generally some bitter remarks to make upon persons of notoriety, whose reputations had preceded them in France. No one was more the object of these remarks than the Princess Louis de Rohan, alias *Princess Troubetskoi, Duchess of Sagan, Duchess of Courland*—I scarcely know by what name to call her, filled as the history of her life is with divorces. Her beauty at this period could not be questioned, but it was not a beauty to my taste. I may be deemed fastidious, and I will plead guilty; but I could never like those snowy charms, destitute of all animation—that swan-like transparent skin—those eyes, whose only expression was pride; a pride for which it would be difficult to assign a cause, unless it was intended as a compliment to the memory of her grandfather, Biron. I could discover no beauty in that neck, certainly fair, and dressed in the most shining satin, but stiff, formal, and devoid of feminine grace. This is an attraction, which, however, she ought to have possessed, for she ruined herself in husbands—a singular article to set down among the expenses of a pretty woman, but it was nevertheless true. A clause in the last marriage contract stipulated that M. Louis de Rohan should have a pension of 60,000 francs, in case of a divorce demanded by the Princess; but if the demand was made on his part, it was to be but 12,000. M. de Rohan, therefore, left matters to the will of Providence, or rather to the will of his wife, contenting himself with the enjoyment of present possession, and leaving her operations to her own choice, without disturbing himself about the future. Various strictures of the Princess of Rohan upon the court of the Tuileries, and especially upon his sisters, had reached the First Consul, who, in consequence, perhaps, concerned himself more with her than he would otherwise have done. One evening he enlarged upon the absurdity of founding pretensions on rank and riches, in a country altogether republican, and where all such distinctions were confounded in perfect equality.

"Mr. Fox," said he, "will always hold the first place in an

assembly at the Tuileries, and Mrs. Fox would in France always take precedence of the Princess de Rohan, because the reputation of her husband is reflected upon her. As for Madame de Courland, as she is called, I really do not understand upon what high merit she founds her right to treat with rudeness a people who do not desire her company, and are well versed in her genealogy."

This sally showed me the danger of injuring those who have not attacked us. There can be no doubt that the First Consul, desirous as he was of preserving with the young Emperor the friendly relations he had held with his father, would have been particularly gracious towards a lady who was partly his subject, had not her own proceedings drawn his ill-will upon her. The airs of the Princess were especially ill-judged at a period when France, so great in herself, saw assembled within her bosom all the greatest and most illustrious denizens of England, Germany, Italy, and Russia. When the Princess trespassed on the rules of politeness, which continually happened, the source of her high pretensions was naturally looked into, and her genealogy was found to be but of seventy years, standing;—sufficient, it is true, to confer nobility on a really illustrious extraction, but by no means adequate to support an hereditary title to arrogance.

The Duchess of Courland, her mother, united with a haughty carriage considerable amenity of speech and manner, and pleased me much. She had been beautiful—more so indeed than her eldest daughter. I was not acquainted with her daughter, whom they called *Eccelenza*, but I think the beauty of the Duchess de Dino, the youngest daughter, incomparably preferable to her eldest sister's; there is more fire, more feeling, more intellectual vivacity in one of her black eyes, than in the whole person of Madame de Sagan; at the time I am speaking of, however, she was a child, and could not enter into rivalry with her sister. What an admirable picture is Gérard's of the Duchess de Dino! It is the most enchanting of the children of the desert. Her turban, her robe, the sky which surrounds her, all is in harmony with the Oriental character she assumes; the picture, like all others from Gérard's hand, is admirably poetical.

Madame Dolgoroucky, of whom I have before spoken, had the power of being extremely agreeable if she had had the inclination, but this was unfortunately wanting. She found us more lenient in our judgment upon her than her own countrymen, one of whom, Prince George Galitzin, declared a mortal enmity against her. I have known few men so witty, but he was too satirical to be liked. Without absolute misanthropy he was no friend to human nature, which was neither good nor amiable enough to please him, but such characters

as the Princess Dolgoroucky he persecuted incessantly. The Prince was for ever in chase of some of her absurdities, her pride, her literary pretensions, her passion for splendid attire; he drew admirably, and possessed the difficult art of making the most exact resemblances in caricature, without disfiguring his persons.

Who does not remember, with sensations of tenderness and pleasure, the charming Pole, Madame Zamoiska. How attractive was her mild, amiable, and intelligent countenance! The sweetness of her disposition, the grace of her manners, and the symmetry of her figure! Her husband, though colder in manner than is usual with the Poles, was agreeable and much liked in society.

The lovely Lady Conyngham, since so celebrated in England, was then in the first bloom of that beauty which acquired such general and just admiration, though I must confess that a countenance so devoid of expression could never interest me. In contemplating the Venus de Medici, I know that the almost divine vision before me is but a marble statue, and look for no smile responsive to mine; but in a living and intellectual being I have a right to expect something more than mere regularity of feature—some emanation of mind; the face of the beautiful Marchioness, however, exhibited none. She was extremely elegant, dressed well, and carried her solicitude for her complexion to the extent of saving it by spending the day in her bed, from which she rose only in time to prepare for a ball or other evening engagement. Lord Conyngham was a striking contrast to his wife. The Duchess of Gordon, who, amongst her masculine language, often hit upon a witty truism, once said of him:—"Lord Conyngham! Oh, he is a perfect comb—all teeth and back."

The English ambassador, Lord Whitworth, appeared to have been selected by his government expressly for qualifications likely to prove disagreeable to us. His fine figure and handsome face could not atone to French society for his haughtiness, in which his wife, the Duchess of Dorset, seconded him to admiration. Their manners speedily rendered both so unpopular in the circles they frequented, that their stay at Paris must have been anything but pleasant to themselves; his lordship, however, knew it would not be of long duration. There were other Englishmen in France of greater distinction, for originality at least, if for no superior attribute. Amongst these was Lord Yarmouth, now Marquis of Hertford, respecting whom a greater diversity of opinion was entertained as well by his own countrymen as ours; but one qualification which he indisputably possessed, was a clearness and acuteness of intellect rarely met with in the most subtle Venetian or Gascon. The faculties of Lord

Yarmouth's mind are incomparably more penetrating than those of his countrymen generally, whose capacities, however extensive, are for the most part slow of conception. Young as he then was, an indifferent opinion of his fellow-creatures was but too visibly imprinted on his features; his countenance, his smile, expressed utter coldness, or a sardonic and cynical criticism of all that was passing around him. The world of fashion was not to his taste, and he connected himself little with it; but when induced to *put on harness*, as he termed it, he made himself perfectly agreeable to those with whom he associated. He was passionately fond of gambling, and played nobly and generously.

One of the new comers, who was generally well received, was the Count Philip von Cobentzel, Imperial Ambassador to the French Republic. I never knew a man whose excellent sense and judgment, courteous manners, and goodness of heart, were more perfectly in harmony with talents of the highest order, or in more absolute disparity with his countenance and the whole exterior man. His person was less comic than his cousin's, when the latter received couriers in black silk breeches and puffed hair—but scarcely less unique. In contrast to Count Louis's slovenliness and perpetual action, Count Philip, a little man, was neatness and precision personified. Amongst his striking peculiarities may be reckoned his well-tied queue, and his front hair carefully turned up above the forehead, which gave him a perfect resemblance to *the ace of spades*, a nickname which was accordingly imposed upon him; his dress, always strictly suited to the season, of the make of Maria Theresa's court, and most incongruous with the fashions of the day; his clear shrill voice, like that of a good old active and gossiping woman; and the odd constraint of his gait, shuffling between the quick pace, most natural and convenient to him, and the slow motion which he considered most becoming to an ambassador. With all these eccentricities, he was an excellent man, of observing habits and retentive memory, and chatted freely and very agreeably with such persons as pleased him. He was once the subject of a humorous adventure. At a ball at my house, about two o'clock in the morning, the Duchess of Gordon took Count Philip by the hand, and led him down the whole length of an English country-dance, at that time the favourite amusement, and introduced about four times at every ball. The Duchess bustled about not the less actively for her respectable rotundity, dragging after her the illustrious diplomatist, not in the habit of moving his slender legs with such impetuosity. The Count, who enjoyed a joke, but did not relish being its object, was conscious of

the ludicrous spectacle in which he was figuring; the unrestrained joviality of his partner, however, got the better of his vexation, and he good-humouredly attended her up and down the dance, making one of his formal bows whenever he asked her hand, acquitting himself on the whole with good grace, and laughing heartily afterwards at the mad prank in which the Duchess had made him share. The singular effect of a couple so oddly assorted, not only with each other, but with the young and merry group amongst whom they mixed, might well make an impression that time has not effaced from my mind.

While passing, in review, the persons who in 1802 enlivened the society of Paris, I must not omit my beloved friend Madame Demidoff, who created a great sensation there by the luxury and splendour of her establishment, which exceeded all that had yet been witnessed in Paris since the revolution. Her husband, who was then a different being from when we last saw him on his road to die in Italy, but neither more amusing, good-humoured, nor agreeable, gave fêtes and balls, as he afterwards did at Florence; but in 1802, my amiable Elizabeth was present to do the honours of his house, and the fine saloons of the Hotel de Praslin were continually opened to a joyous multitude, happy not only in the gaiety of the scene, but in the charm so seldom experienced in such crowded assemblies of a friendly and kind reception. Madame Demidoff did not, however, bestow her affections indiscriminately; it was not every one that she loved, but there was a magic in her simplest word or look, which charmed all who approached her.

"I am very glad to see you," said she, in her soft sweet voice, smiling, and inclining her head with a grace peculiarly her own. And these simple words, addressed to a stranger whom she saw, perhaps, for the second or third time, comprised all that the most cordial hospitality could offer; but when any one she loved, myself for example, approached, "How happy I am to see you!" said she; and the pressure of her hand and animation of her countenance, plainly spoke her sincerity. Madame Demidoff was not pretty, and yet she was universally pleasing; because she possessed charms which are superior even to beauty, unaffected grace, and suavity. Who, that has seen her waltz, can forget her sylph-like movements, unequalled in ease and suppleness by any other person I ever knew, except Madame Lallemand. I have about two hundred letters from Madame Demidoff; in all of which may be traced that warmth of heart and strength of affection she bestowed on her friends, united with a playful but harmless wit. I have seen her in the most sorrowful periods of my life, and in moments of anguish, excited by her own sufferings,

and always observed the same indifference to self, and the same devoted solicitude for her friends. And what would not those friends have done for her? She has often experienced, that neither distance nor season could present obstacles to a heart that loved, and had the opportunity of obliging her.

Her husband treated her with harshness. But the heart of Elizabeth was formed to feel and return kindness;—affection is a bond she could never have loosened. The world has passed judgment between them, and, as usual, the world was mistaken; because it hastens forward, unheeding the obscurity of the road, and without waiting for daylight to guide its steps: but she whose life was so disturbed, so grievously agitated, now reposes in peace on the marble pillow of her stately monument, the most magnificent in the cemetery of Père la Chaise.

During the visits of these distinguished foreigners in Paris, much attention was directed to the treasures of art it contained, as well as to the specimens it afforded of the national industry and skill. I had hitherto from various causes, more particularly from my attendance upon my dear mother during her long illness, been prevented from becoming acquainted with the extent of these splendid objects, and accordingly embraced eagerly the opportunity now afforded me of making many excursions in the company of artists and scientific men, in order to gratify my taste for the arts. When the First Consul heard of this, he reproached me for not including our foreign visitors in the parties. "You are the wife of the commandant of Paris, it would be an agreeable way of doing the honours of the city to show your friends that we are worth the trouble they take in visiting us."

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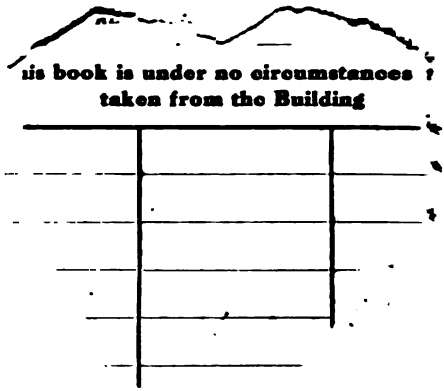
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